三国志 37

魏呉激突 横山光輝

希望コミックス 110

SANGOKUSHI

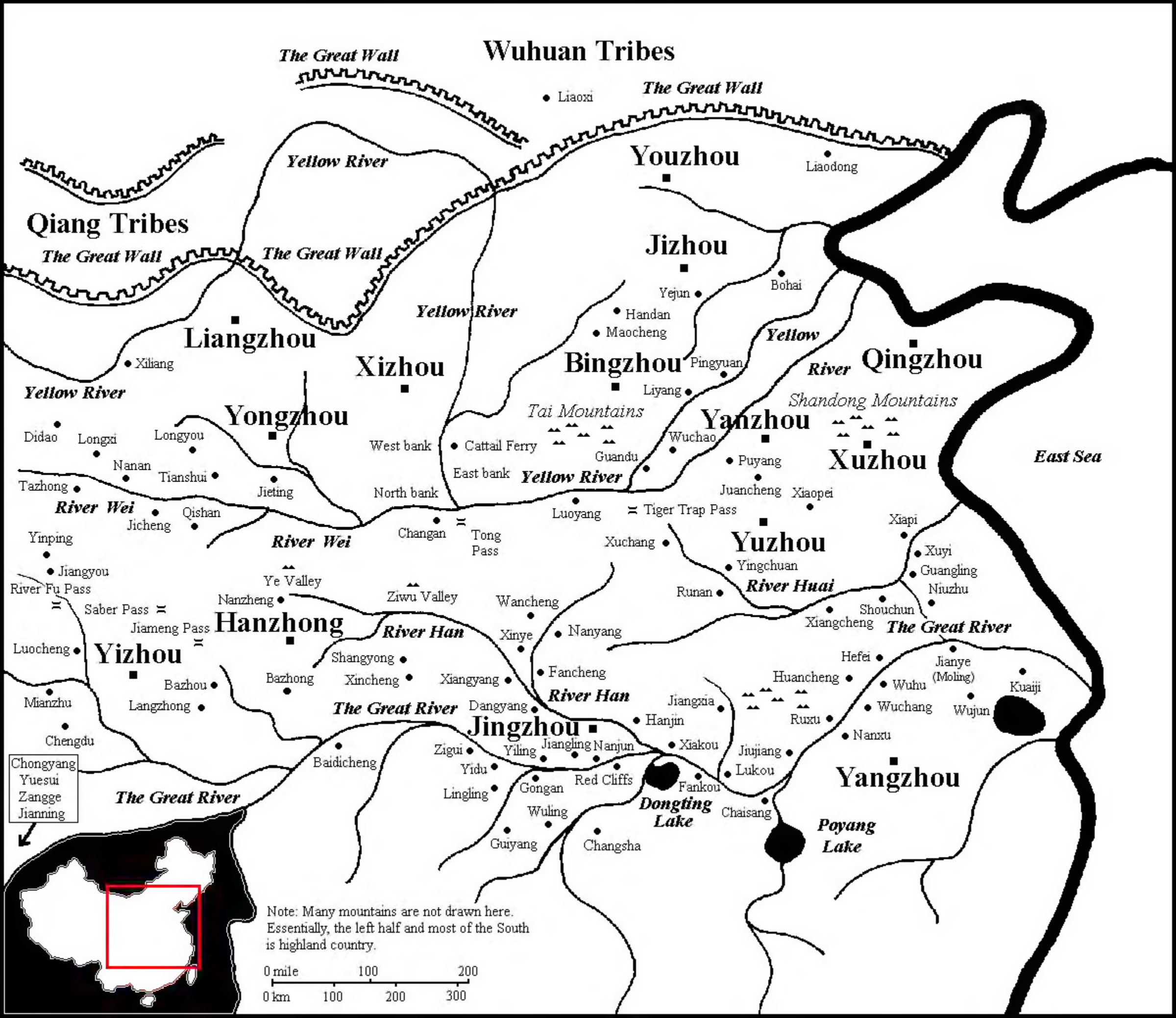
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THE CLASH
BETWEEN
WEI AND WU



ZUO CI
YUANFANG

YOKOYAMA
MITSUTERU


Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

MAJOR CHARACTERS OF SANGOKUSHI



CAI MAO:
FORMER GENERAL OF LIU BIAO, WHO BECAME THE SUPREME ADMIRAL OF WEI'S NAVY WHEN JINGZHOU SURRENDERED TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE IS FRAMED BY ZHOU YU'S PLOT AND THUS EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.



CAO CAO MENGDE:
THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. HAVING BECOME THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, HE HAS RELEGATED EMPEROR XIAN AS A MERE PUPPET RULER.



CAO REN:
YOUNGER COUSIN OF CAO CAO AND NOW HIS LOYAL GENERAL.



CAO REN:
COUSIN OF CAO CAO AND NOW HIS LOYAL GENERAL. PORTRAYED AS BRAVE BUT HOT-TEMPERED IN THE STORY.



CHENG GONG:
A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH HIM AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HOWEVER, HE LATER DEFECTS TO LU BU AND SERVES AS HIS ADVISOR. IN VOLUME 14, HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH LU BU.



CHENG YU:
IMPORTANT AND LOYAL STRATEGIST SERVING CAO CAO.



CHEN DENG:
THE SON OF CHEN GUI AND FORMERLY TAO QIAN OF XUZHOU'S SUBORDINATE. HE AND HIS FATHER SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL.



CHEN GUI:
FATHER OF CHEN DENG WHO SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL. DESPITE SECRETLY WORKING TOGETHER WITH LIU BEI AGAINST CAO CAO, CAO CAO SPARES HIS LIFE AND ALLOWS HIM TO CONTINUE LIVING IN XUZHOU.



DIAN WEI:
CAO CAO'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS ALSO KNOWN BY THE NICKNAME, "E LAI," IN REFERENCE TO THE GENERAL OF THE SAME NAME WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU OF SHANG. IN VOLUME 12, HE WAS KILLED DURING ZHANG XIU'S PLOT TO KILL CAO CAO.



DIAO CHAN:
A SLAVE GIRL OF WANG YUN, WHO RAISED HER AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO BY HAVING HER SEDUCE BOTH MEN. IN VOLUME 8, SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL.



DONG CHENG:
ELDER STATESMAN OF HAN WHO IS EMPEROR XIAN'S CONFIDANT. EMPEROR XIAN SECRETELY ASKS HIM TO ELIMINATE CAO CAO, WHO NOW RULES THE IMPERIAL COURT AS CHANCELLOR. IN VOLUME 17, HE IS EXECUTED AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION PLOT IS FOUND OUT BY CAO CAO.



DONG ZHUO:
GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZED CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATED HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, BECOMING AN INFAMOUS TYRANT. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.



EMPRESS HE:
ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS AND SHE ROSE TO BECOME THE EMPRESS, UTILIZING RUTHLESS MEANS. HOWEVER, SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER AND KILLED BY DONG ZHUO WHEN HE CAME TO POWER.



FA ZHENG:
FORMER SUBJECT OF LIU ZHANG, BUT DEFECTED TO LIU BEI DURING HIS CONQUEST OF SHU. HE IS ONE OF LIU BEI'S KEY STRATEGISTS.



GAN NING:
FORMER-PIRATE WHO IS NOW A FIRECE GENERAL OF WU.



GONGSUN ZAN:
GOVERNOR OF BEIPING, WHO WAGES WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO FOR KILLING HIS YOUNG BROTHER. IN VOLUME 15, YUAN SHAO'S ARMY CONQUERS BEIPING, CAUSING GONGSUN ZAN TO COMMIT SUICIDE.



GUAN PING:
GUAN YU'S ADOPTED SON AS OF VOLUME 19.



GUAN YU YUNCHANG:
SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.



GUO JIA:
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. HE DIES FROM ILLNESS DURING CAO CAO'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE YUAN FAMILY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).



HE JIN:
ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER ROSE TO BECOME EMPRESS HE. HE IS KILLED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS DURING THEIR POWER STRUGGLE IN VOLUME 3.



HUANG ZHONG:
AN ELDERLY WARRIOR GENERAL RENOWNED ESPECIALLY FOR HIS SKILL WITH THE BOW. FORMERLY SERVED LIU BIAO AND HAN XUAN BUT SINCE THE END OF V28, HE NOW SERVES LIU BEI.



HUANG GAI:
LOYAL GENERAL OF WU, WHOSE FAMILY HAS SERVED THE SUN FAMILY FOR THREE GENERATIONS.



JIANG QIN:
GENERAL OF WU. FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI, BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR SUN CE'S FATHER, SUN JIAN.



LI DIAN:
SCHOLARLY GENERAL UNDER THE SERVICE OF CAO CAO.



JIA XU:
FORMER STRATEGIST OF ZHANG XIU, WHO PLOTTED A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CAO CAO, WHICH LEFT DIAN WEI DEAD. AS OF VOLUME 16, HE HAS DEFECTED TO CAO CAO AND SERVES AS HIS ADVISOR.



LI RU:
CUNNING ADVISOR TO DONG ZHUO. WITH HIS ADVICE, DONG ZHUO FIRMLY SECURES HIS SEAT AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED ALONG WITH DONG ZHUO WHEN LU BU BETRAYS THEM.



LIU BIAO:
THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU. HE PASSES AWAY DUE TO SICKNESS IN VOLUME 22 AND THE CONSEQUENT SUCCESSION CRISIS ALLOWS CAO CAO TO TAKE OVER JINGZHOU.



LIU BEI XUANDE:
THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN, WHO CLAIMS DESCENT FROM EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI.



LIU FENG:
LIU BEI'S ADOPTED SON. ORIGINALLY THE NEPHEW OF LIU MI, HE WAS ADOPTED UPON FIRST SIGHT BY LIU BEI WHO TOOK A LIKING TO HIM IN VOLUME 21.



LIU QI:
ELDEST SON OF LIU BIAO WHO TEMPORARILY LOSES HIS INHERITANCE OF JINGZHOU DUE TO CAI MAO'S PLOT. IN VOLUME 29, HE PASSES AWAY FROM ILLNESS AND THE RIGHTFUL OWNERSHIP OF JINGZHOU CONTINUES TO BE DEBATED BETWEEN SUN QUAN AND LIU BEI.



LIU ZHANG:
INCOMPETENT RULER OF SHU (ALTERNATIVE NAME FOR YIZHOU). HE SEEKS LIU BEI'S HELP TO FEND OFF ZHANG LU, BUT RELATIONS SOON SOUR AND LIU BEI USURPS HIS RULE OVER SHU. AS OF VOLUME 35, HE IS EXILED TO JINGZHOU.



LU BU:
ALTHOUGH REPUTED TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR, HE IS HOT-HEADED AND RARELY HEEDS WISE ADVICE. IN VOLUME 14, HE WAS BETRAYED BY HIS SUBORDINATES, AND EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.



LU SU:
IMPORTANT MILITARY GENERAL AND ADVISOR OF WU.



MA CHAO:
A FIERCE WARRIOR WHO SEEKS TO AVENGE HIS FATHER MA TENG'S DEATH AT CAO CAO'S HANDS. IN VOLUME 35, HE ENTERS LIU BEI'S SERVICE AND BECOMES ONE OF HIS MOST VALUABLE GENERALS.



MA DAI:
A NEPHEW OF MA CHAO WHO ENTERS LIU BEI'S SERVICE ALONGSIDE HIS UNCLE.



MA LIANG:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS. HE IS THE FOURTH YOUNGEST OF THE FIVE MA BROTHERS, AND IS NOTED FOR HIS INTELLECT AND WHITE EYEBROWS.



MA TENG:
GOVERNOR OF XILIANG AND FATHER OF MA CHAO, WHO SIGNED THE BLOOD-PLEDGE TO ELIMINATE CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 30, HE IS EXECUTED FOR A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT OF CAO CAO.



MENG DA:
FORMER SUBJECT OF LIU ZHANG WHO DEFECTS TO LIU BEI, ALONG WITH HIS GOOD FRIENDS ZHANG SONG AND FA ZHENG.



MI ZHU:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS.



PANG DE:
FIERCE GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED MA TENG AND THEN MA CHAO. IN VOLUME 36, HE DEFECTS TO CAO CAO'S SERVICE DUE TO A TROUBLED RELATIONSHIP WITH ZHANG LU, THE LORD OF HANZHONG.



PANG TONG SHIYUAN:
NICKNAMED THE YOUNG PHOENIX (FENGCHU), HE IS A MASTERFUL STRATEGIST SAID TO BE ZHUGE LIANG'S EQUAL. AFTER ENTERING LIU BEI'S SERVICE, HE TRAGICALLY MET AN EARLY DEATH IN SHU WHEN AMBUSHED BY ZHANG REN IN VOLUME 34.



SHUI JING:
HIS REAL NAME IS SIMA HUI BUT HE IS MORE COMMONLY KNOWN BY HIS TAOIST NAME, SHUI JING (MEANING WATER MIRROR). HE IS THE TEACHER OF ZHUGE LIANG, PANG TONG, AND XU SHU.



SUN CE:
ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN, WHO TURNS THE SUN FAMILY'S FORTUNE AROUND WITH HIS CONQUEST OF THE SOUTHLANDS. IN VOLUME 19, A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AND CONFLICT WITH YU JI CAUSES HIS BODY AND MENTAL HEALTH TO WEAKEN. HE SUCCUMBS TO DEATH SHORTLY AFTER.



SUN JIAN:
THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. HOWEVER, HIS ALLIES LIU BIAO AND YUAN SHAO TO TURN ON HIM WHEN HE TRIES TO KEEP THE IMPERIAL SEAL FOR HIMSELF. IN VOLUME 7, HE IS KILLED IN BATTLE AGAINST YUAN SHAO.



SUN QIAN:
TRUSTED ADVISOR TO LIU BEI. (HIS ROLE IS MUCH SMALLER IN SANGOKUSHI COMPARED TO THE ORIGINAL NOVEL.)



SUN QUAN:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE AND THE CURRENT RULER OF WU, THE SOUTHLANDS OF CHINA.



TAISHI CI:
GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED LIU YAO BUT DEFECTED TO SUN CE IN VOLUME 11. DURING THE BATTLE OF HEFEI (VOL. 29), HE FALLS PREY TO ZHANG LIAO'S PLAN AND IS KILLED IN BATTLE.



TAO QIAN:
THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY INVOKES CAO CAO'S WRATH WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLS CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG. UPON HIS DEATH, HE BEQUEATHS XUZHOU TO LIU BEI.



THE TEN ATTENDANTS:
A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY WERE KILLED DURING THE POWER STRUGGLE WITH HE JIN IN VOLUME 4.



WANG YUN:
THE MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN THE IMPERIAL COURT. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL USING DIAO CHAN IN VOLUME 8. HOWEVER, HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).



WEI YAN:
GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED LIU BIAO AND HAN XUAN BUT HAS DEFECTED TO LIU BEI ALONG WITH HUANG ZHONG IN VOLUME 28.



WEN CHOU:
HE AND YANG LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 18, HE IS AMBUSHED BY CAO CAO'S ARMY AND KILLED BY GUAN YU.



XIAHOU DUN:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. HE LOST HIS LEFT EYE DURING A BATTLE AGAINST LU BU'S ARMY IN VOLUME 13.



XU CHU:
TRUSTED BODYGUARD OF CAO CAO. ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HE WAS RECRUITED BY CAO CAO WHO WAS IMPRESSED AFTER SEEING XU CHU'S DUEL WITH DIAN WEI.



XU SHU (SHAN FU):
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING. AFTER A BRIEF STINT OF SERVICE TO LIU BEI, HE IS TRICKED INTO COMING TO XUCHANG AND SERVING CAO CAO (VOLUME 21).



XUN YU:
TALENTED ADVISOR TO CA CAO.



XU HUANG:
CALM AND COLLECTED GENERAL UNDER SERVICE TO CAO CAO. CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE FIVE TOP GENERALS OF WEI BY CHEN SHOU, AUTHOR OF RECORDS OF THE THREE KINGDOMS.



YAN LIANG:
HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 17, HE WAS KILLED BY GUAN YU WHILE FIGHTING CAO CAO'S ARMY AT BAIMA.



YAN YAN:
FORMER GENERAL OF LIU ZHANG BUT DEFECTED TO LIU BEI AFTER HIS CAPTURE AT ZHANG FEI'S HANDS IN VOLUME 34. HE IS NOTED FOR HIS ENERGY DESPITE HIS OLD AGE.



YU JIN:
GENERAL SERVING CAO CAO. CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE FIVE TOP GENERALS OF WEI BY CHEN SHOU, AUTHOR OF RECORDS OF THE THREE KINGDOMS.



YUAN SHAO:
OLDER BROTHER OF YUAN SHU AND THE GOVERNOR OF JIZHOU. AFTER MANY YEARS OF WARRING AGAINST CAO CAO FOR CONTROL OF NORTHERN CHINA, HE AND HIS FAMILY ARE DEFEATED.



YUAN SHU:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. AFTER RECEIVING THE IMPERIAL SEAL FROM SUN CE, HE DECLARES HIMSELF AS THE EMPEROR OF ZHONG DYNASTY. IN VOLUME 15, HE DIES OF THIRST AFTER BEING ON THE RUN FROM LIU BEI AND CAO CAO'S ARMIES.



ZHANG FEI YIDE:
A FIRECE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.



ZHANG LIAO:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S TOP GENERALS. HE WAS FORMERLY LU BU'S SUBORDINATE BUT DEFECTED TO CAO CAO AFTER THE FORMER'S EXECUTION.



ZHANG LU:
THE LEADER OF THE CELESTIAL MASTERS TAOIST MOVEMENT, AND THE RULER OF HANZHONG. IN VOLUME 36, CAO CAO CONQUERS HANZHONG BUT SPARES ZHANG LU.



ZHANG REN:
ONE OF SHU'S MOST CAPABLE GENERALS WHO PLANNED THE AMBUSH THAT KILLED PANG TONG. HE REFUSED TO SERVE LIU BEI UNLIKE MANY OF HIS COMRADES AND WAS THUS EXECUTED WHEN FINALLY CAPTURED AT THE HANDS OF ZHUGE LIANG (VOLUME 35).



ZHANG SONG:
AN ADVISOR TO LIU ZHANG WHO, UPON FAILING TO MAKE AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN CAO CAO AND LIU ZHANG, SOUGHT LIU BEI'S SUPPORT AND SWITCHED HIS ALLEGIANCE. IN VOLUME 34, HE IS EXECUTED WHEN HIS BROTHER REPORTS HIS BETRAYAL TO LIU ZHANG.



ZHANG XIU:
LORD OF WANCHENG WHO ATTEMPTED TO KILL CAO CAO DURING THE BATTLE OF WANCHENG IN VOLUME 12. AFTER YEARS OF CONFLICT AGAINST CAO CAO, HE FINALLY DECIDES TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO IN VOLUME 16.



ZHAO YUN ZILONG:
A FORMER SUBJECT OF YUAN SHAO BUT LATER DEFECTED TO SERVE GONGSUN ZAN. AFTER GONGSUN ZAN'S DEATH, HE BECOMES ONE OF LIU BEI'S MOST TRUSTED GENERALS.



ZHOU TAI:
GENERAL OF WU. FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN.

ZHANG ZHAO:
ELDER STATESMAN AND SUN QUAN'S TRUSTED ADVISOR. HE ORIGINALLY ENTERED SUN CE'S SERVICE ALONG WITH ZHANG HONG, WITH WHOM HE WAS REFERRED TO AS THE "TWO ZHANGS."

ZHOU CANG:
FORMERLY A YELLOW TURBAN, HE MEETS GUAN YU IN VOLUME 18 AND BECOMES HIS SUBORDINATE.

ZHOU YU GONGJIN:
SWORN BROTHER OF SUN CE, AND ONE OF WU'S TOP MINDS, SERVING AS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF DURING THE BATTLE OF THE RED CLIFFS. HE RECEIVES A CRITICAL ARROW-WOUND DURING HIS NANJUN CAMPAIGN (VOL. 27) WHICH HE NEVER FULLY RECOVERS FROM, LEADING TO HIS TRAGIC EARLY DEATH IN VOLUME 30.

ZHUGE LIANG KONGMING:
MASTERFUL STRATEGIST AND FORMER STUDENT OF SHUI JING. IN VOLUME 21, HE YIELDS TO LIU BEI'S PERSISTENCE AND DECIDES TO BECOME HIS SUBJECT.

SANGOKUSHI (ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志

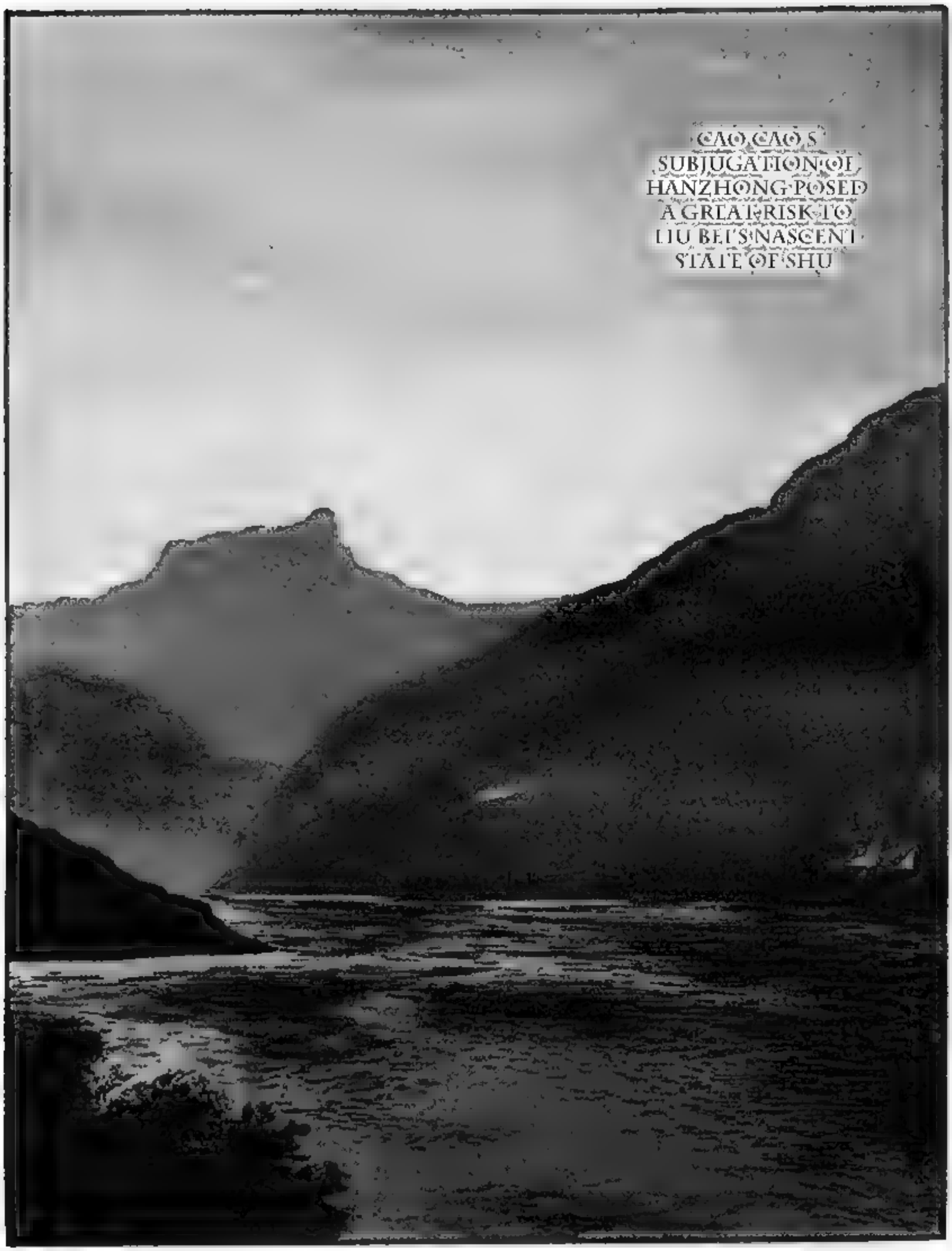
VOLUME 37
THE CLASH BETWEEN WEI AND WU

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〔月刊『コミックトム』掲載〕

WU IS MOVED


CAO CAO'S
SUBJUGATION OF
HANZHONG POSED
A GREAT RISK TO
LIU BEI'S NASCENT
STATE OF SHU

HMM, WEI IS CERTAINLY A DANGEROUS THREAT.

KONGMING, IT HAS NOT BEEN LONG SINCE I'VE TAKEN SHU, AND YET I NOW HAVE CAO CAO LOOMING RIGHT NEXT TO MY BORDERS. CAN WE FEND HIM OFF IF HE WERE TO MOUNT AN INVASION RIGHT NOW?

YES, BUT WHERE?

IT WOULD BE BEST TO DIVERT CAO CAO'S ATTENTION FROM SHU.

YES, RETURNING THREE JINGZHOU COMMANDERIES SHOULD CONVINCE SUN QUAN TO ATTACK HEFEI.

WHERE ELSE BUT WU?

WU!?

BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK WU CAN BE SO EASILY MOVED?

HEFEI IS A CRITICAL LOCATION FOR WEI. CAO CAO WILL SURELY TURN HIS ATTENTION AWAY FROM SHU.

HMM, WHO WOULD BE BEST FOR SUCH A ROLE?

I ADMIT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT, EVEN IF THE OFFER IS TO WU'S PROFIT. A SKILLED DIPLOMAT IS NEEDED.

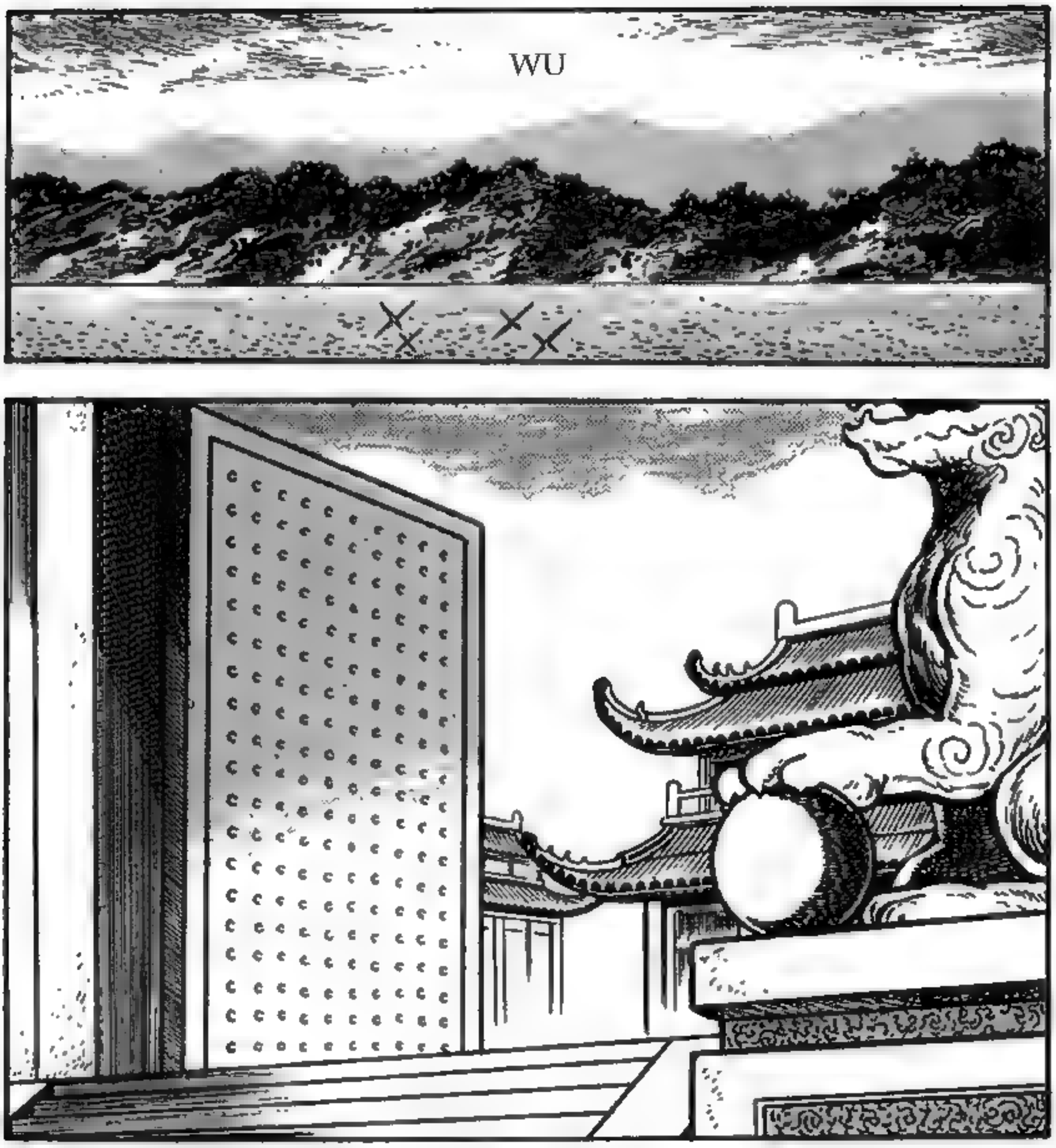
AH, YI JI!

ALLOW ME, MY LORD.

THANK YOU.

THEN I'LL ENTRUST THE TASK TO YOU.

YES, YI JI'S JUST THE MAN WE NEED.


WU
WHAT!? LIU BEI WILL HAND US THREE JINGZHOU COMMANDERIES IF I ATTACK HEFEI!?

THAT WAS PARTLY BECAUSE GUAN YU HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO AT THE TIME.

DO YOU TAKE ME FOR A FOOL!? THE LAST TIME LIU BEI SAID THAT, GUAN YU "CONVENIENTLY" DEFIED HIS ORDERS!

ALLOWING MY LORD TO CALL GUAN YU AWAY FROM JINGZHOU AND ATTACK HANZHONG.

BUT IF YOU WERE TO ATTACK HEFEI, THEN CAO CAO MUST MOVE HIS FORCES AWAY FROM HANZHONG,

HMM...

IF HANZHONG IS CAPTURED, THEN WE WILL EVEN RETURN THE ENTIRETY OF JINGZHOU.

NO, DO NOT BE SO HASTY! REJECTING THIS OFFER CAN BE EQUATED TO RELINQUISHING OUR CLAIM TO JINGZHOU.

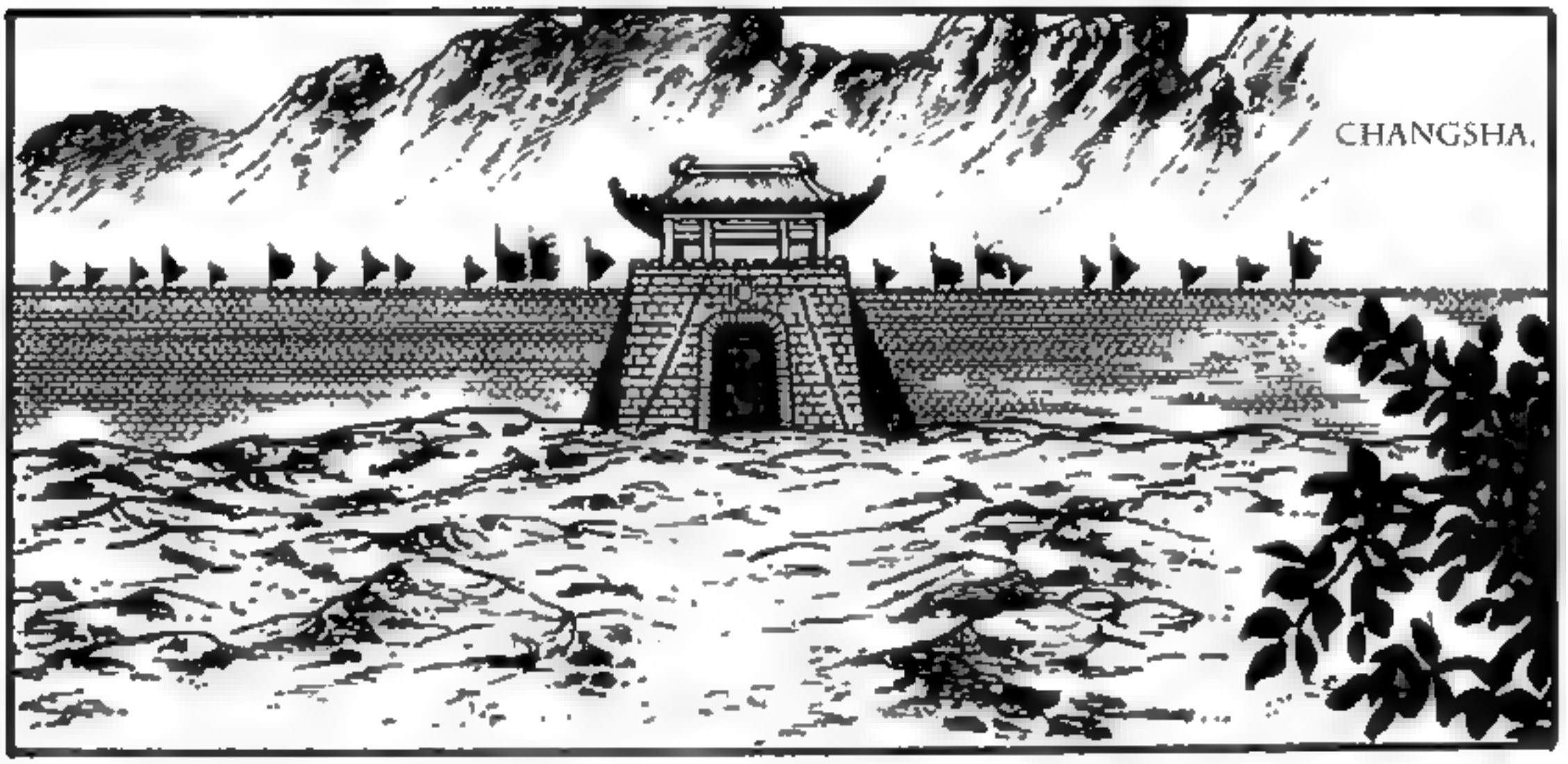
DO NOT BE SWAYED BY HIS WORDS, MY LORD! A LIAR'S PROMISES CAN ONLY RING HOLLOW!

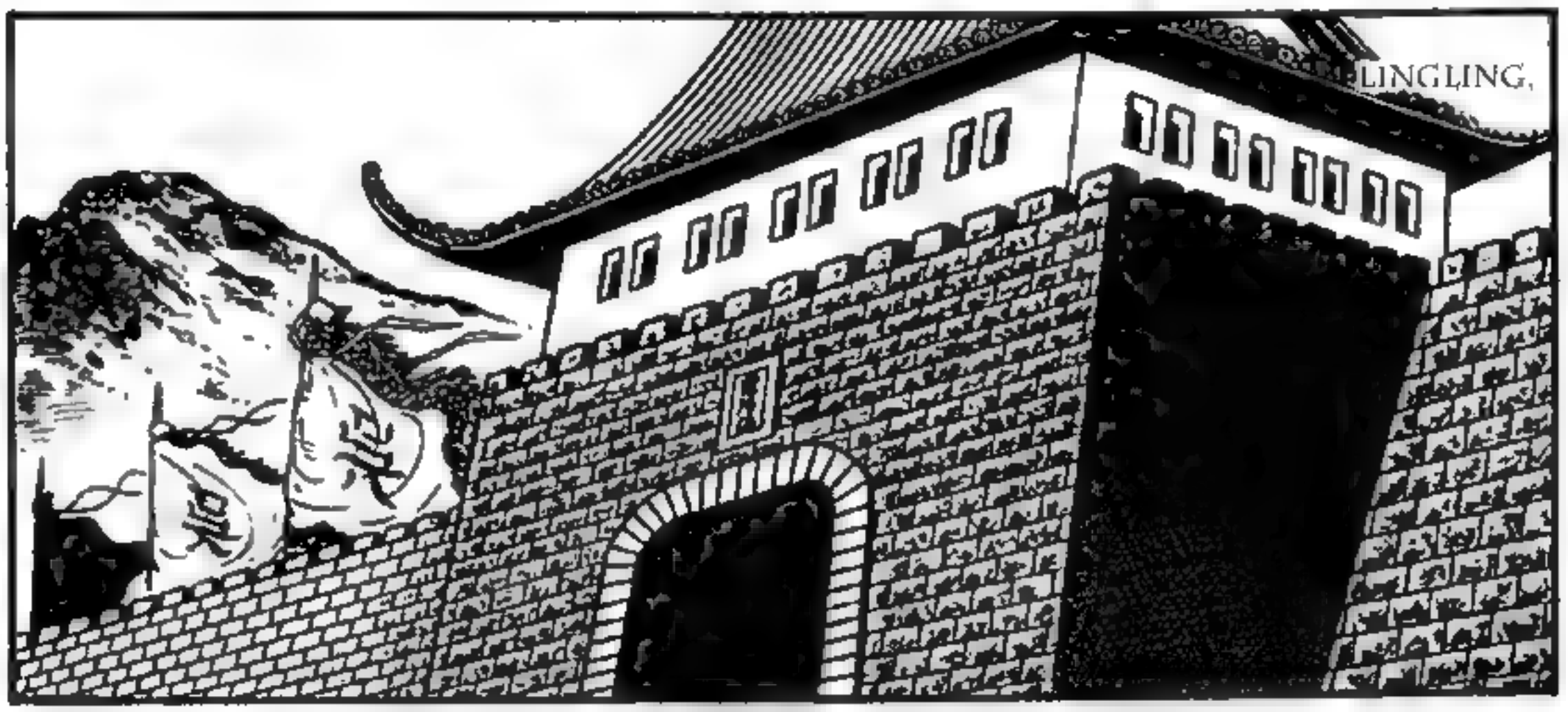
HM...

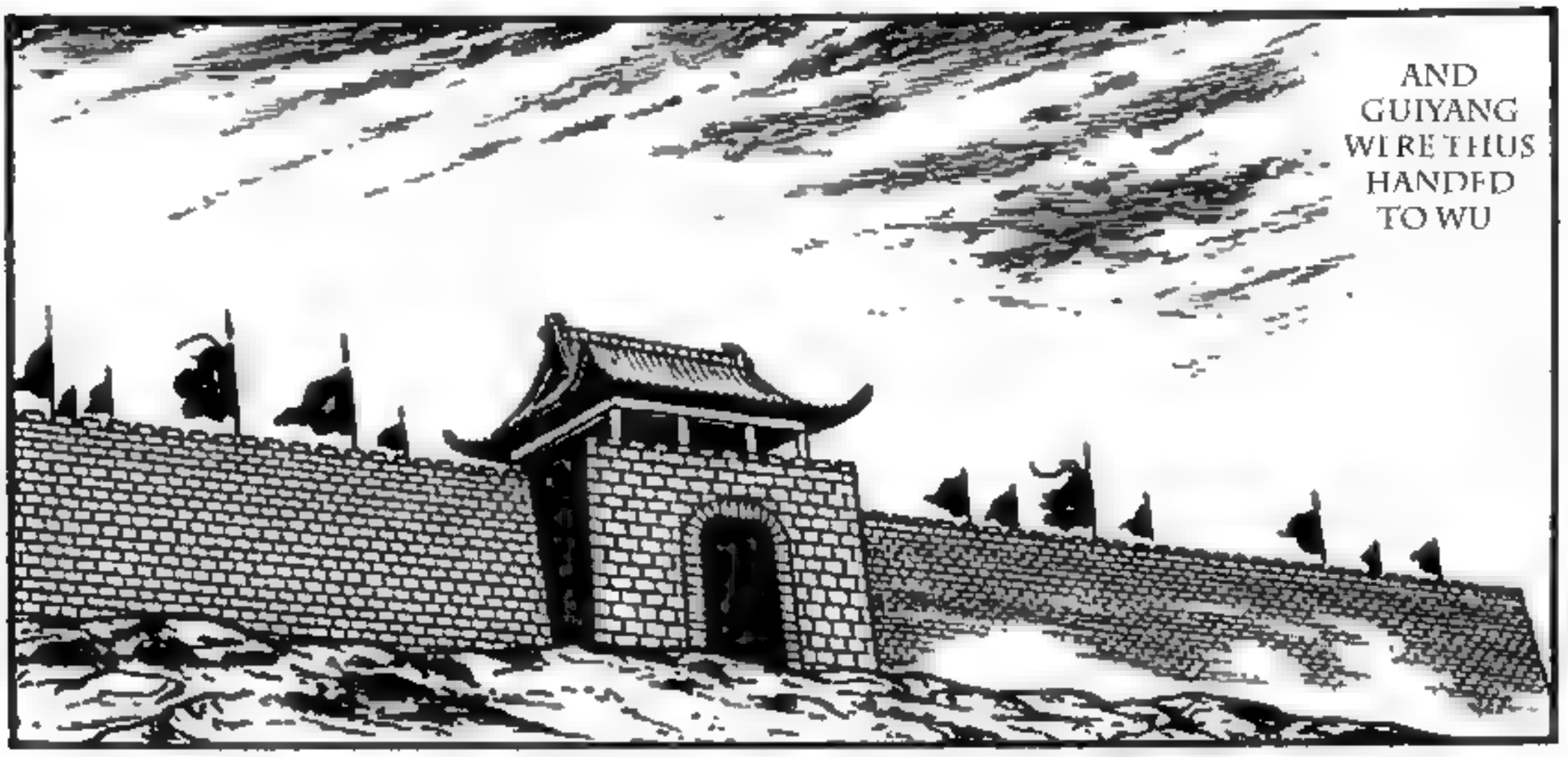
FOR THE TIME BEING, LET US FIRST SECURE THE PROMISED THREE JINGZHOU COMMANDERIES AT LEAST.

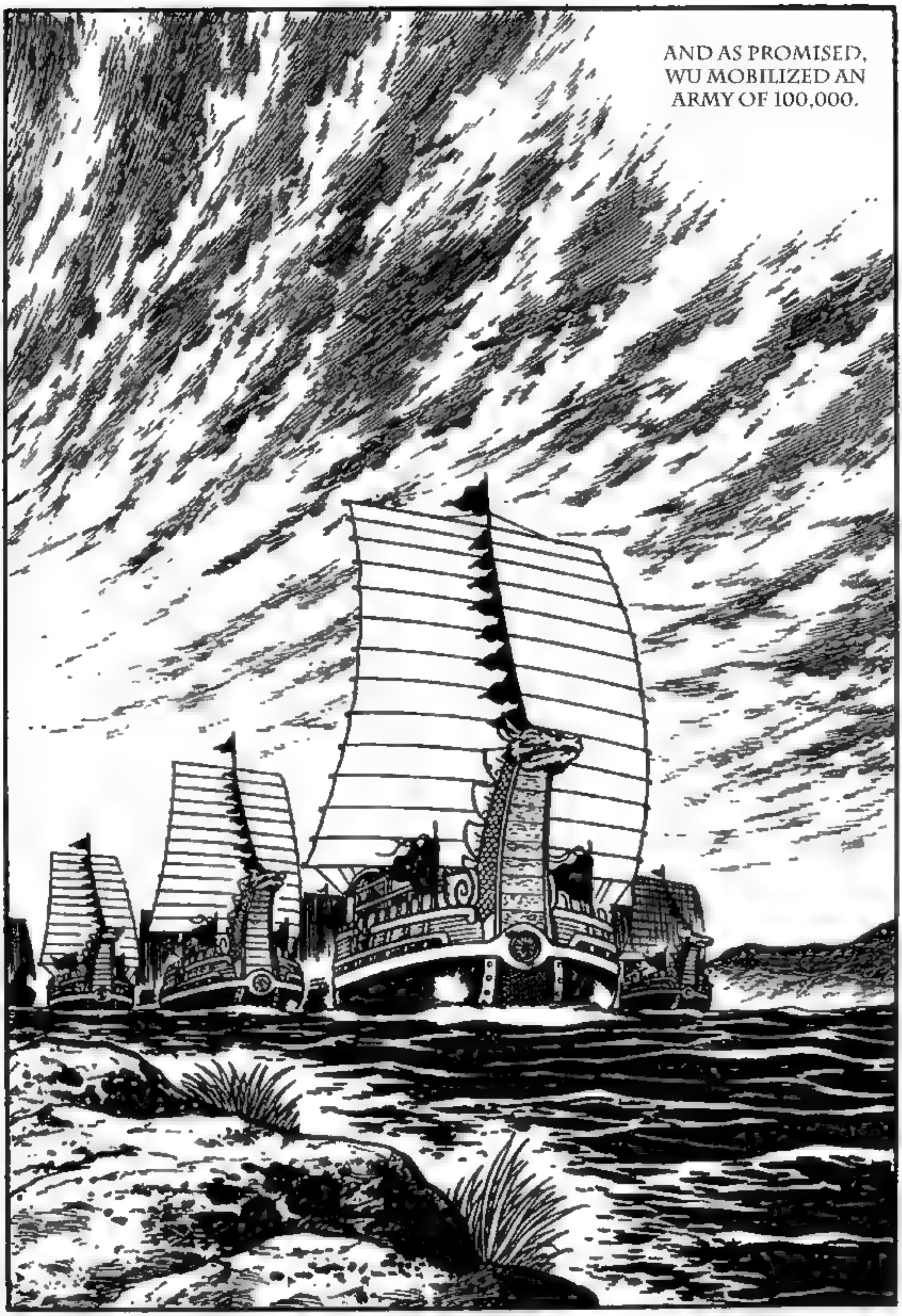
CERTAINLY.

VERY WELL. HAND OVER THE THREE COMMANDERIES, AND THEN WE SHALL SET ABOUT ATTACKING HEFEI.


CHANGSHA,


LINGLING,


AND
GUIYANG
WERE THUS
HANDED
TO WU


AND AS PROMISED, WU MOBILIZED AN ARMY OF 100,000.


THE PLAN WAS TO FIRST CAPTURE HUANCHENG, WHICH SUPPLIED GRAINS TO HEFEI


10,000 TROOPS WERE SENT TO SIEGE HUANCHENG.

HUAN CHENG PUT UP A FIERCE RESISTANCE. HOWEVER

TALL SIEGE TOWERS TO RAIN DOWN ARROWS ON THE DEFENDERS ON THE RAMPARTS WOULD BE IDEAL.

HMM, DOES ANYBODY HAVE ANY BRIGHT IDEAS TO HASTEN THIS SIEGE?

MY LORD, THE MORALE OF OUR TROOPS IS STILL HIGH AS THE WAR'S ONLY JUST BEGUN. LET US USE IT TO OUR ADVANTAGE WITH AN ASSAULT FROM ALL SIDE AT EARLY DAWN TOMORROW.

NO, BUILDING SIEGE TOWERS WILL DRAG OUT THIS SIEGE FAR TOO LONG. WE MUST CAPTURE THIS CITY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND TURN OUR ATTENTION TO HEFEI.

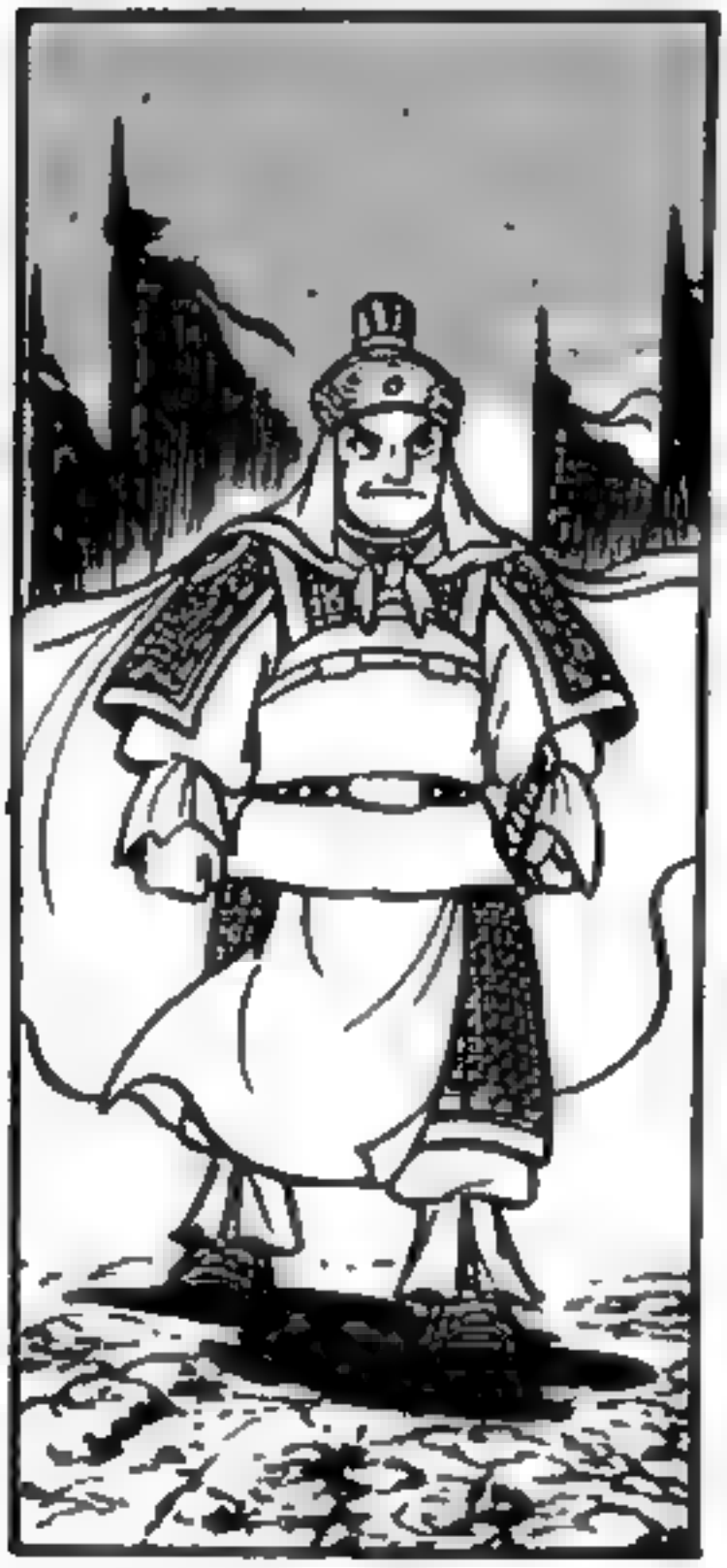
SURROUND THE CITY AND PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK TOMORROW AT DAWN!

HM... AGREED, LU MENG.

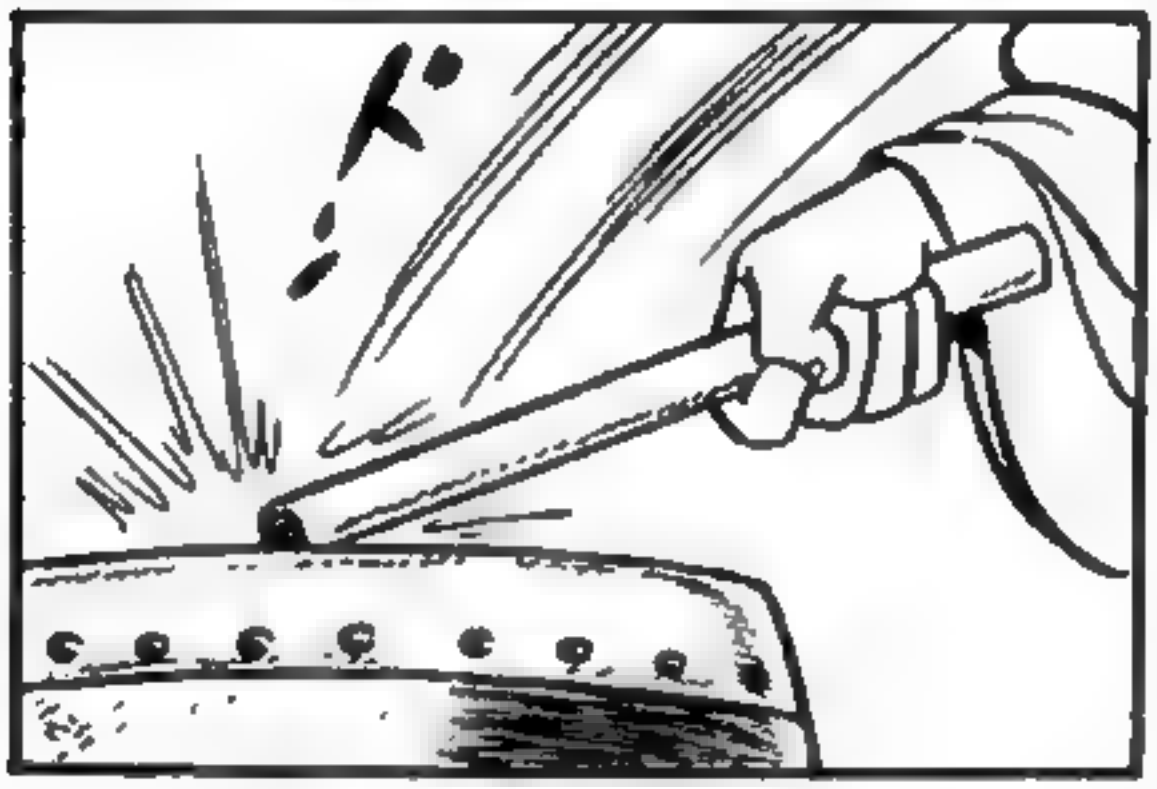
AT DAWN, THE WU TROOPS AWAITED THE SIGNAL TO ATTACK.

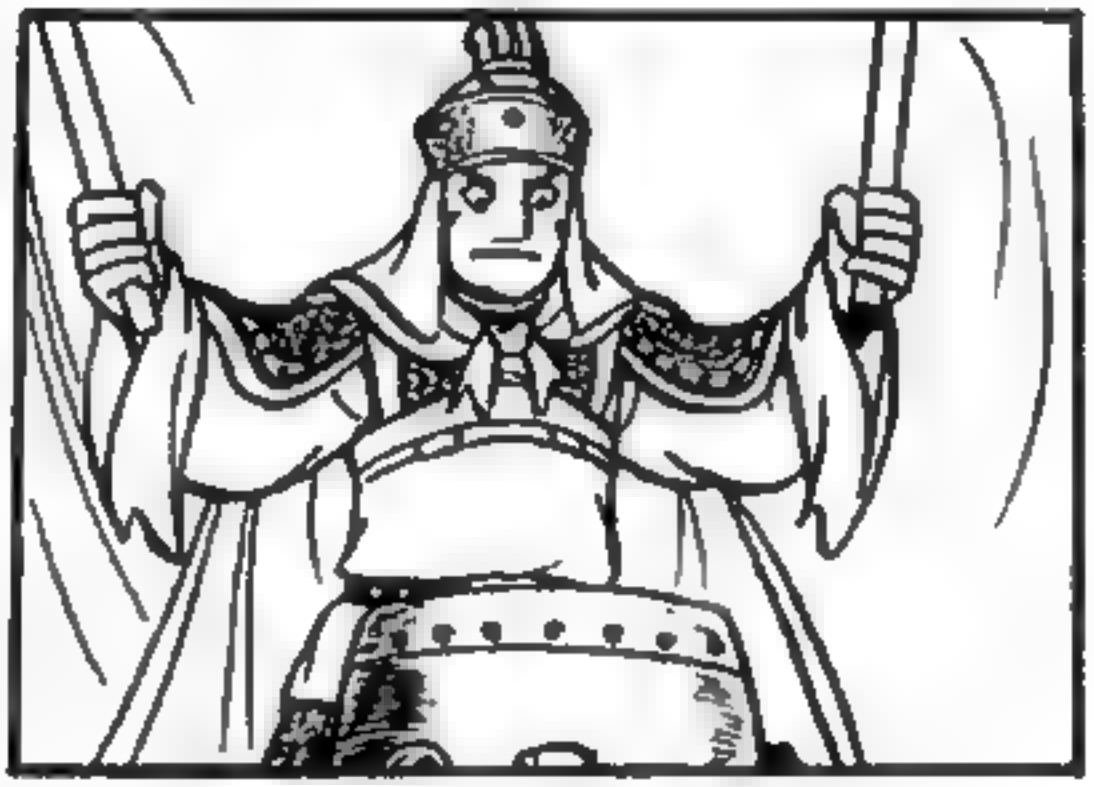
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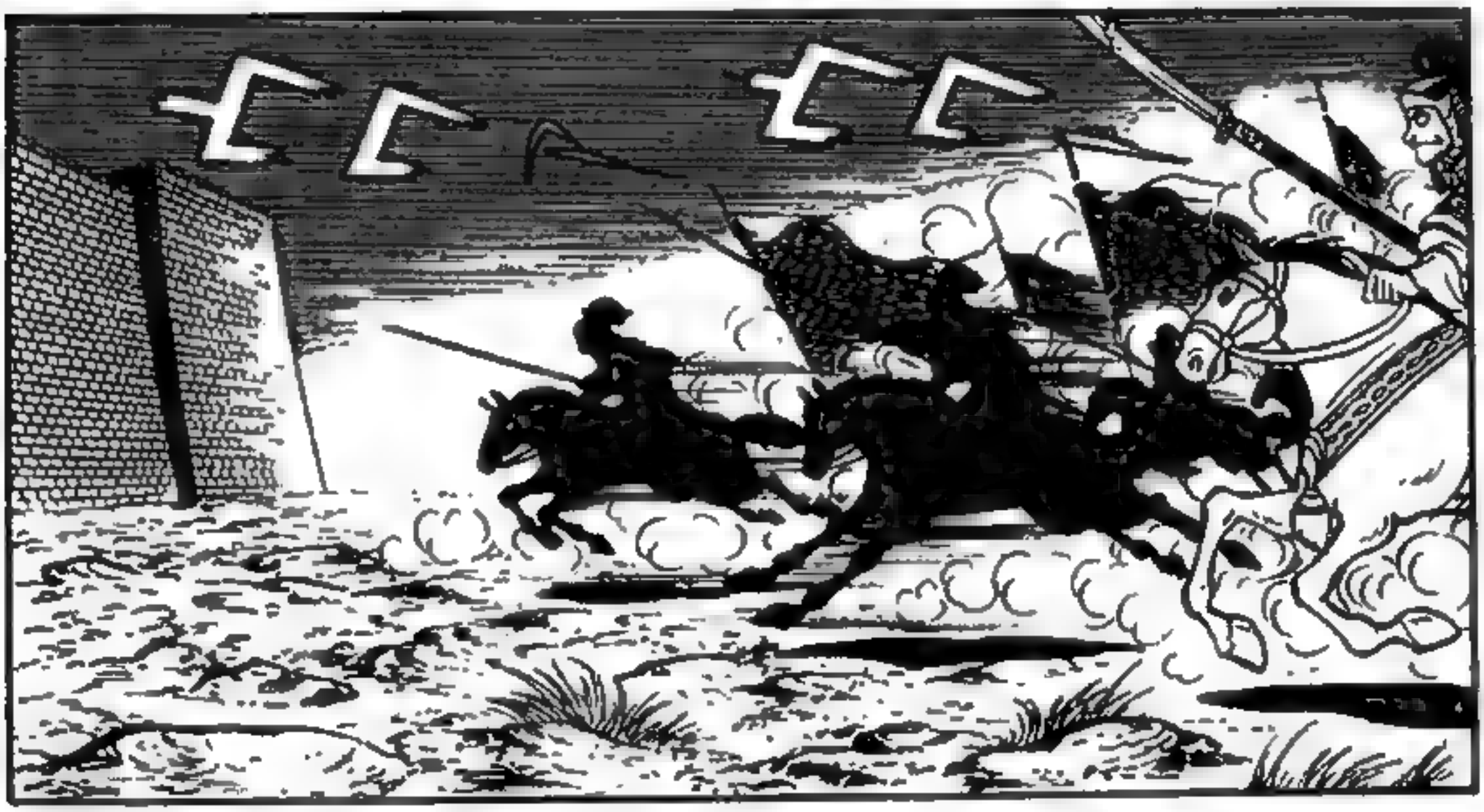



YES.
SHALL I GIVE THE SIGNAL NOW, MY LORD?


K'

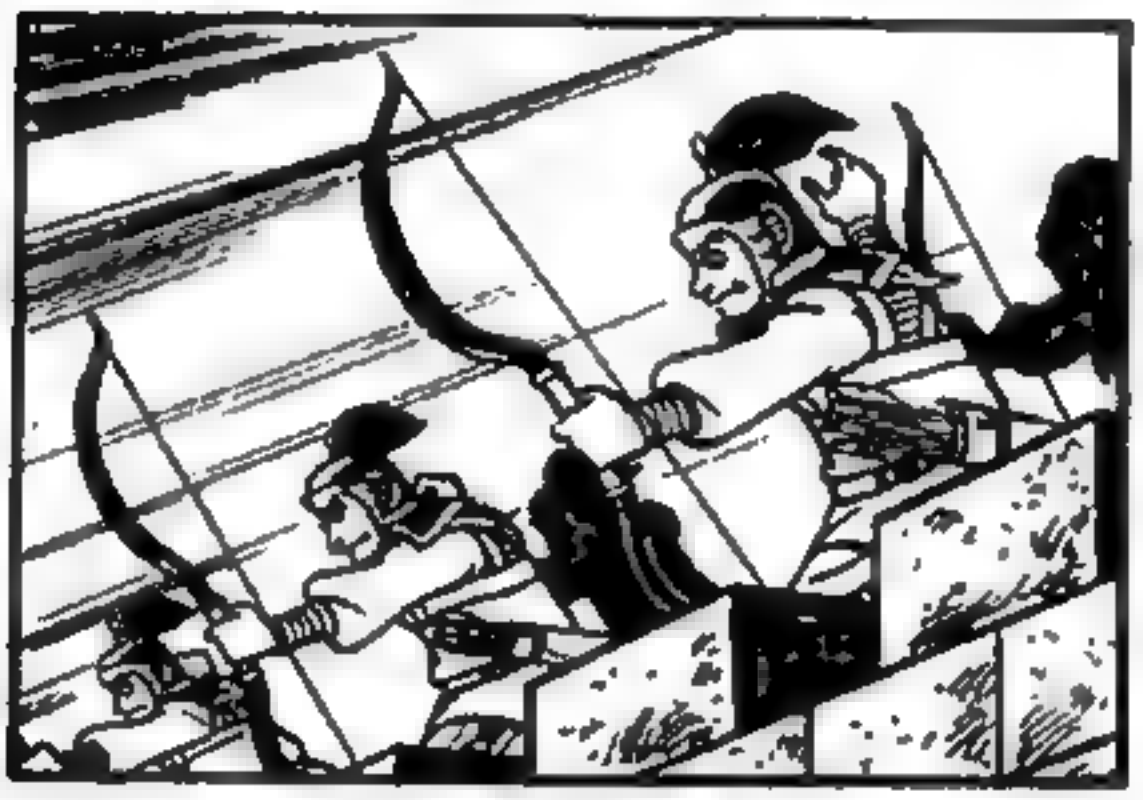






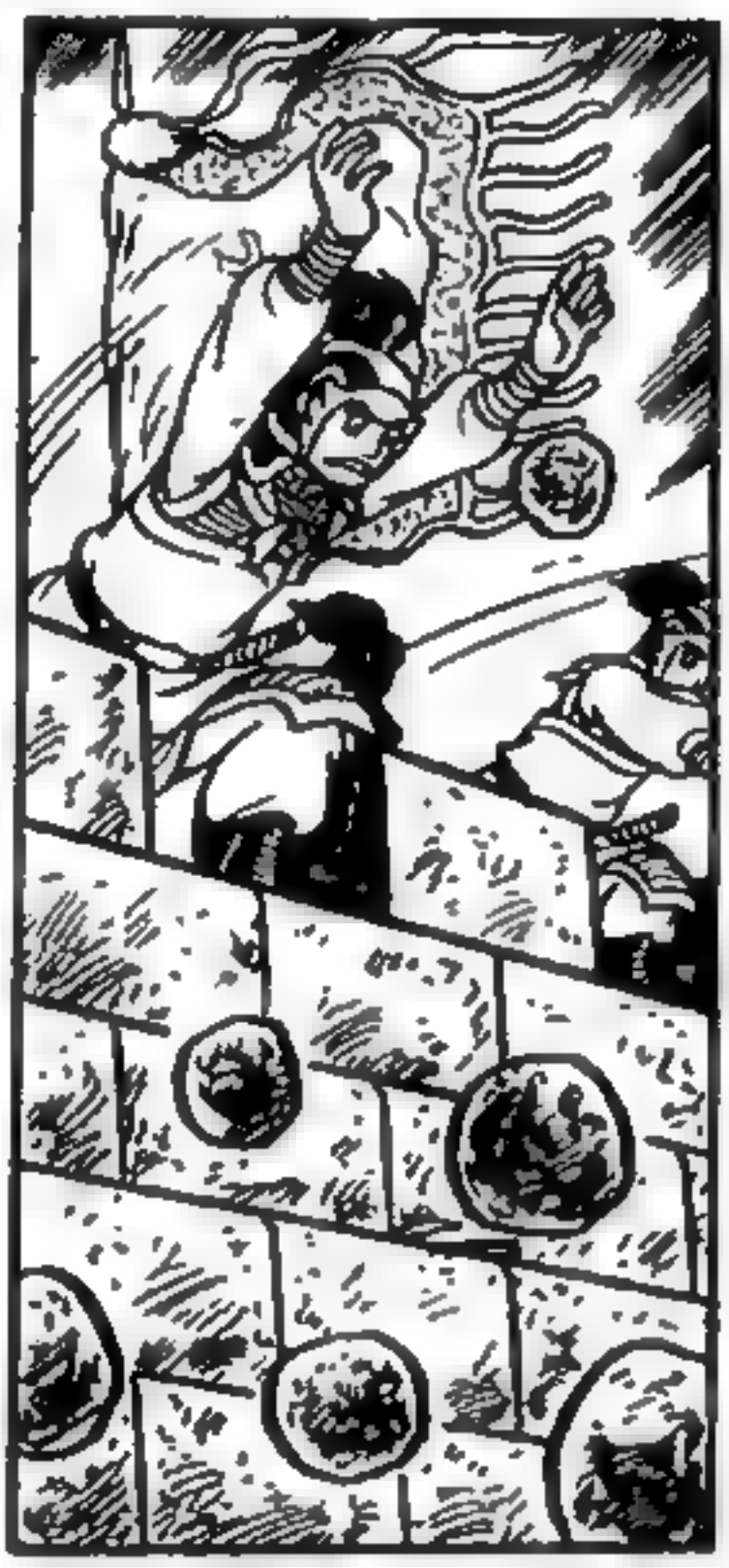



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MNN...
GOVERNOR ZHU GONG, THE ENEMIES ARE TRYING TO CATCH US BY SURPRISE!

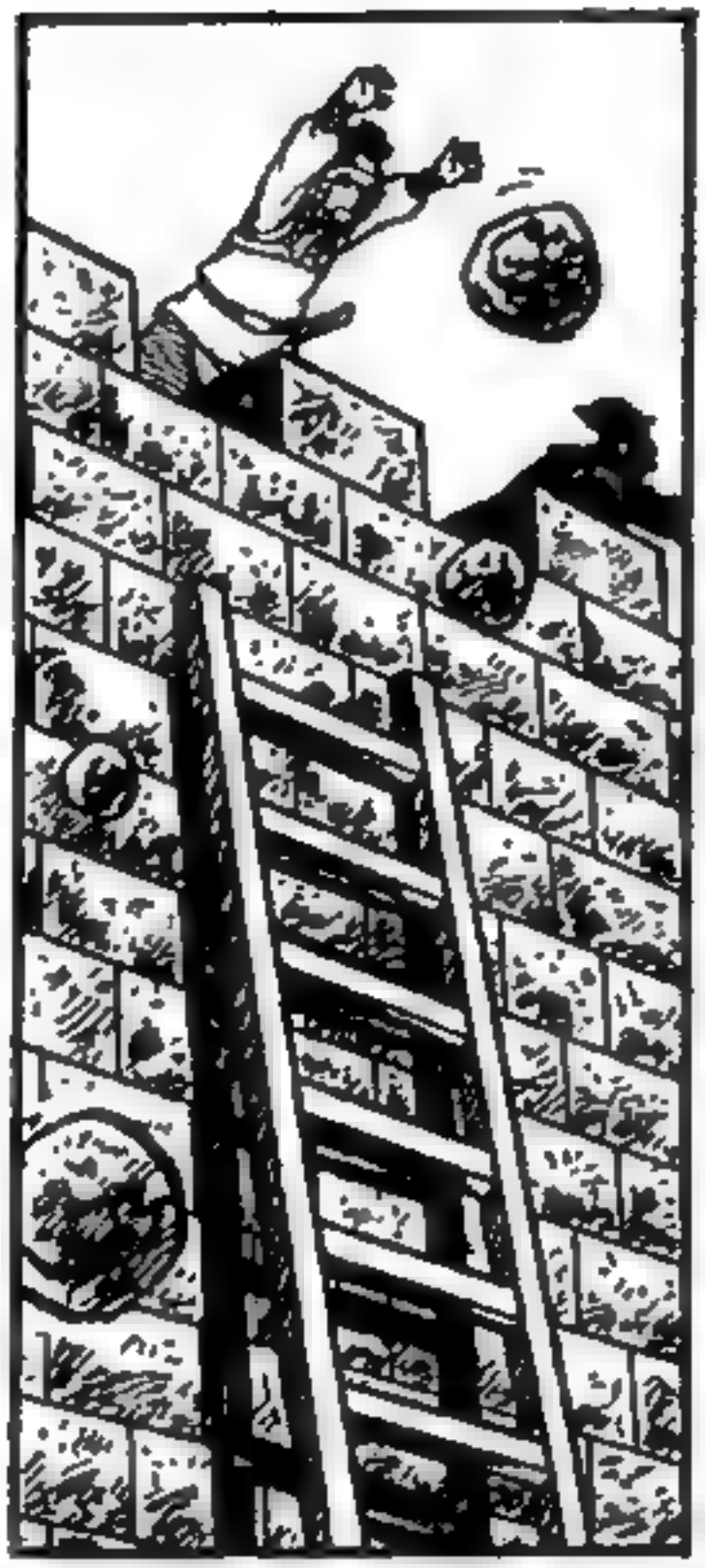


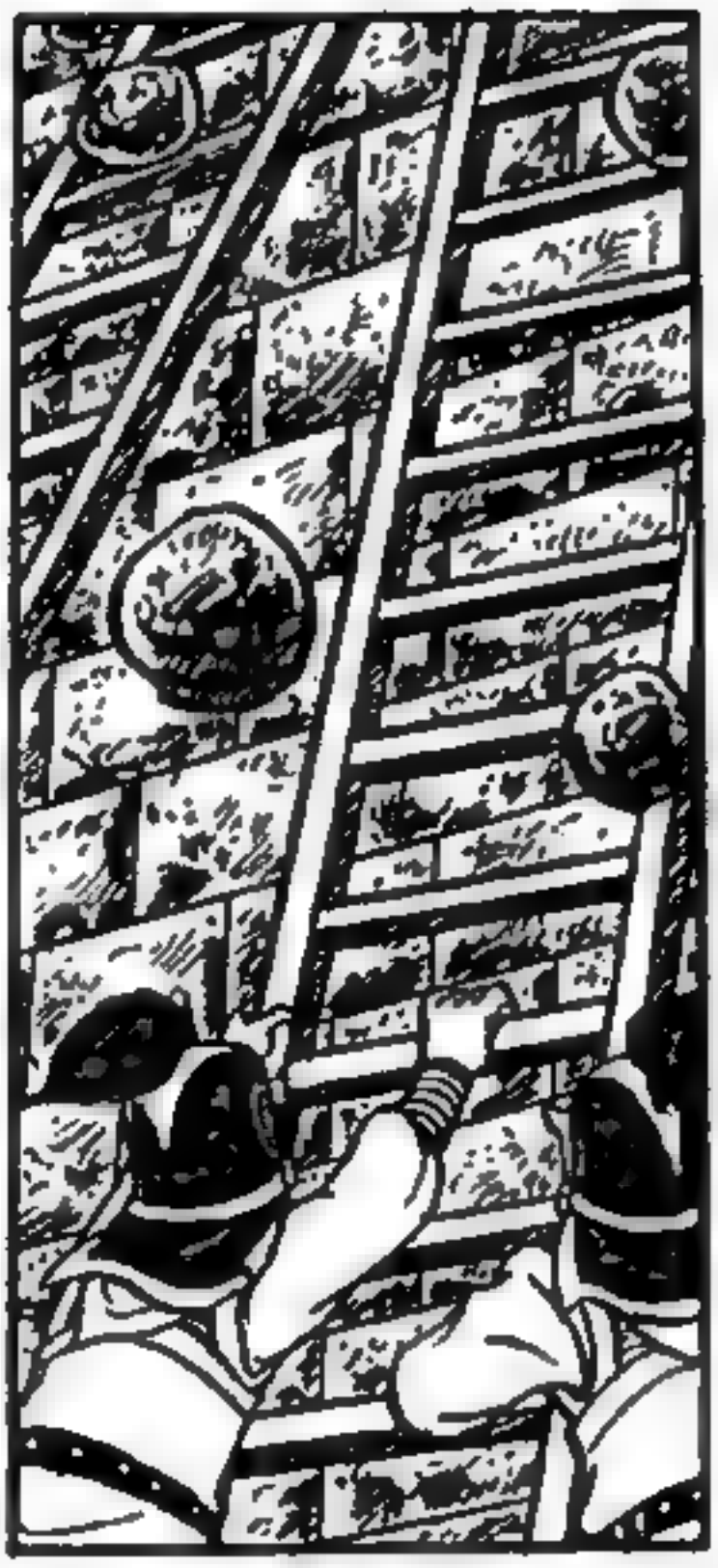

FALTER NOT, MEN! POUR DOWN ALL THE ARROWS AND ROCKS YOU HAVE! WE MUST HOLD OUT UNTIL REINFORCEMENTS FROM HEFEI ARRIVE!






YOU THINK YOU CAN HIT ME WITH THOSE LOUSY AIMS!?










DON'T LET THEM SCALE THE WALLS!








NGHH!






I, GAN NING, IS FIRST TO SCALE THE WALLS!





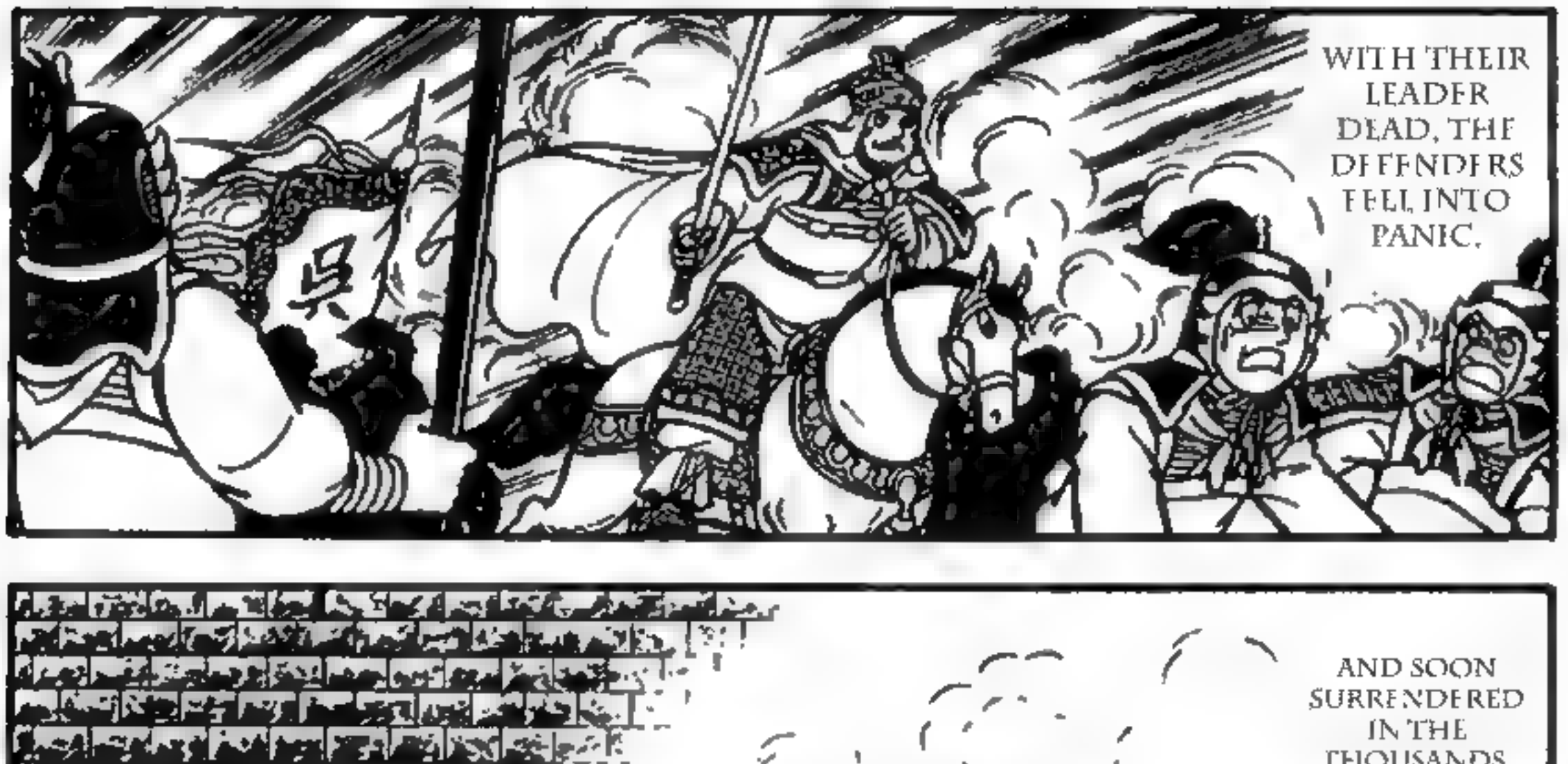
HAVE A TASTE OF MY BALLS!

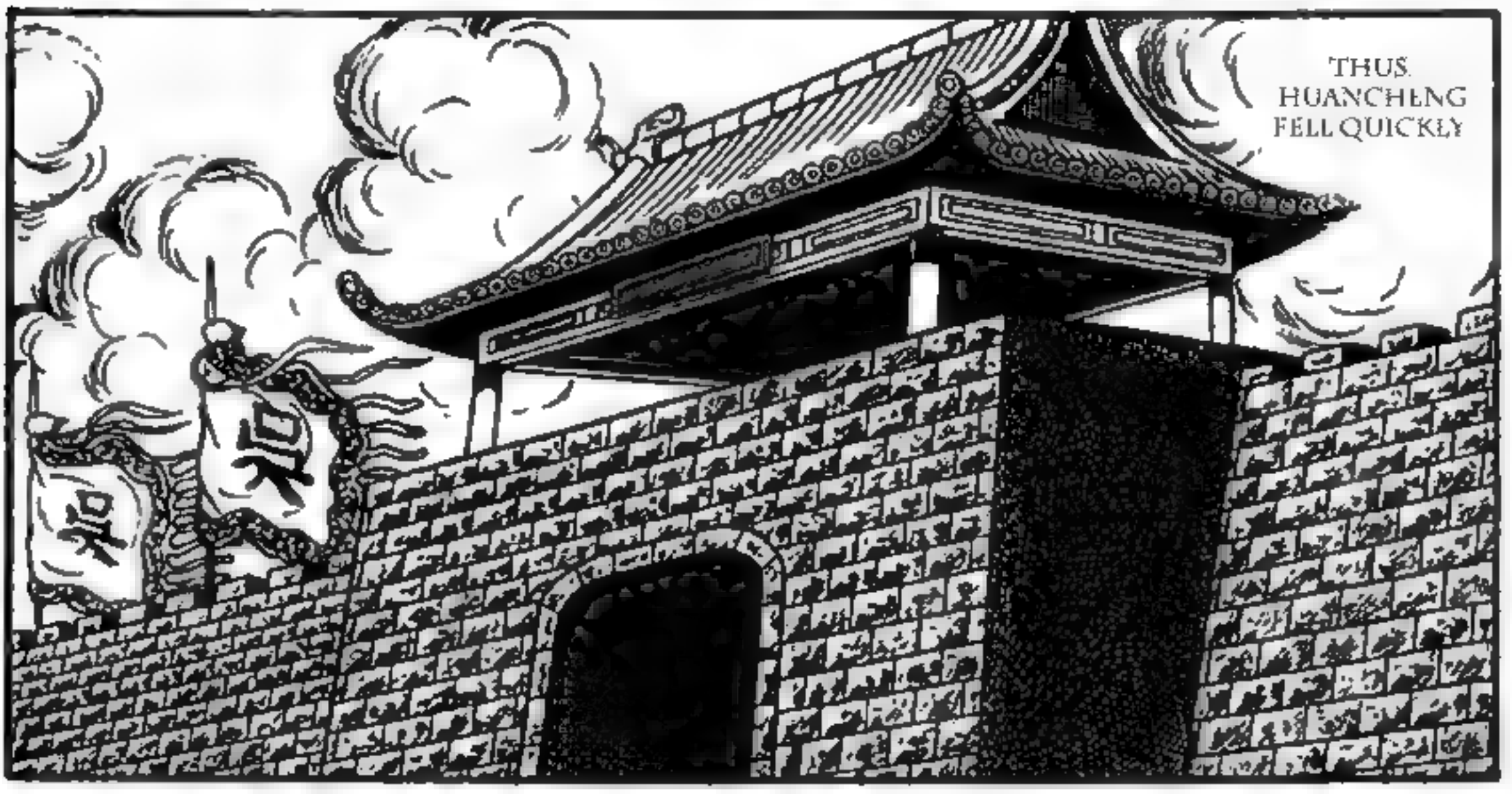
WHY YOU!

AGHH! GOVER-NOR!

AHH!

ACK!


WITH THEIR LEADER DEAD, THE DEFENDERS FELL INTO PANIC.
AND SOON SURRENDERED IN THE THOUSANDS.


THUS HUANCHENG FELL QUICKLY

BATTLE OF XIAOYAO FORD





WE SHOULD STAY BEHIND OUR WALLS AND TIGHTEN DEFENCES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

HMM... THE ENEMIES FAR OUTNUMBER US, WHAT SHOULD WE DO...?

YES, GOING OUT TO MEET THEM HEAD ON WOULD ONLY END DISASTROUSLY FOR US.

LET HIM IN.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCEL-LOR?

EXCUSE ME, GENERAL ZHANG LIAO, BUT A MESSENGER FROM HANZHONG HAS ARRIVED.

YES, SIR.

THANK YOU. IS THIS ABOUT HEFEI'S CURRENT PREDICAMENT?

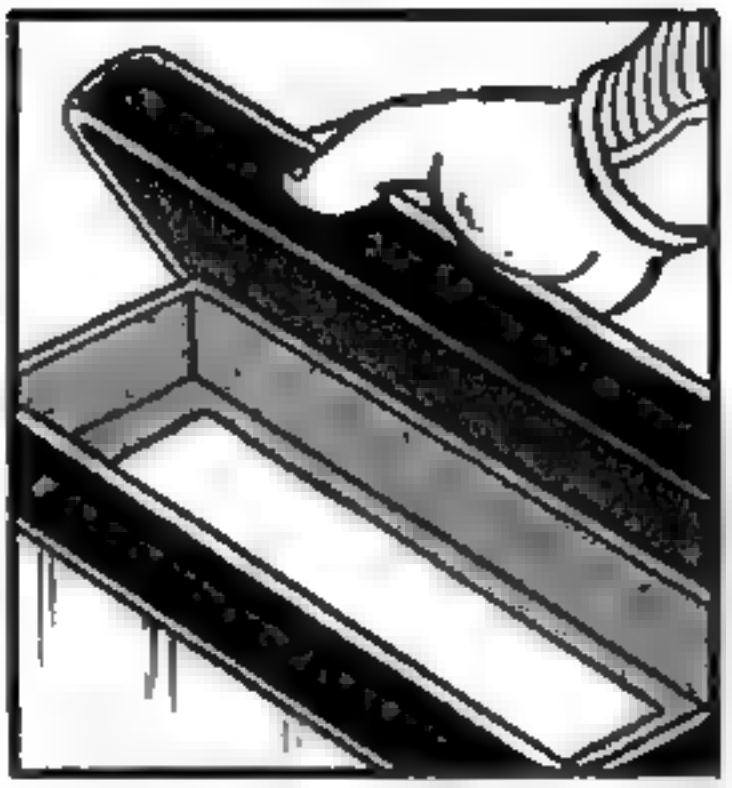
GOOD DAY, SIR. I COME BEARING INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE CHANCELLOR.

OPEN THIS BOX?

YES. THE CHANCELLOR SAID YOU SHOULD OPEN THIS BOX IF THE WU ARMY WERE TO PRESS ONTO HEFEI.

WHAT DOES THE CHANCELLOR SAY?

HMM...





WHAT!? AGAINST WU'S 100,000-STRONG ARMY!?

HE TELLS US TO LEAVE OUR WALLS AND ATTACK.

IF WE WERE TO REMAIN BEHIND THESE WALLS, THE ENEMIES WILL BECOME EVEN MORE CONFIDENT AT OUR LACK OF RESPONSE. THAT BEING SAID, MOUNTING A FULL-OUT ATTACK AGAINST THEM IS FOOLISH.

LISTEN TO THE VERY END. SUN QUAN HAS MOUNTED AN INVASION BECAUSE HE'S HEARD THE CHANCELLOR IS FAR AWAY IN HANZHONG PRESENTLY. HE LIKELY THINKS HEFEI IS EASY PICKINGS AND UNDERESTIMATES OUR STRENGTH.

WHAT THE CHANCELLOR WANTS IS FOR US TO INFLICT SOME DAMAGE TO REASSURE THE POPULACE OF HEFEI AND WEAKEN ENEMY MORALE, AND THEN RETURN TO DEFENSE.

THEN LET'S GET TO ACTION.

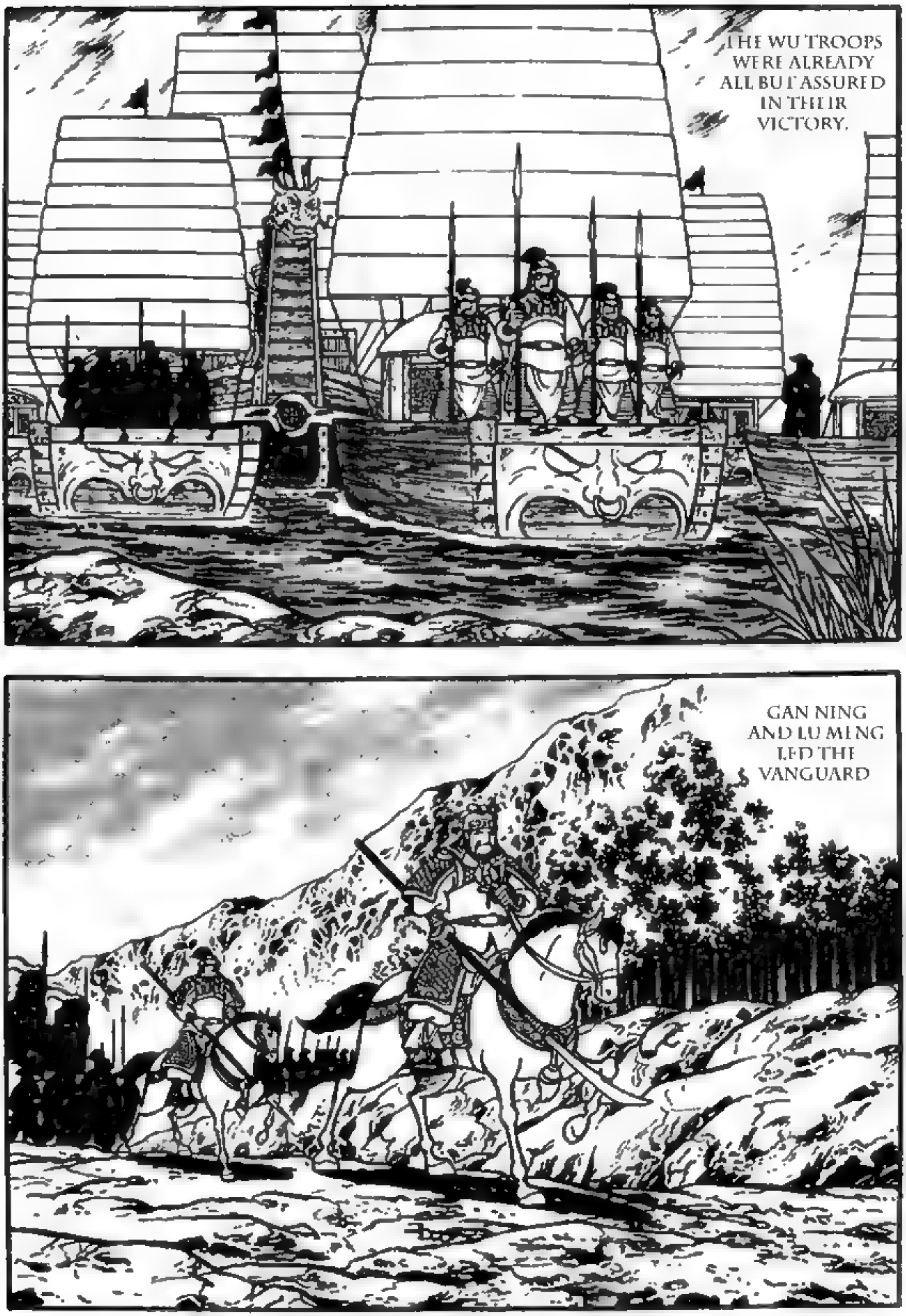
I SEE. SO OUR LORD ADVISES US NOT TO LET THE ENEMIES SIEGE US CONFIDENTLY.

UNDER-STOOD.

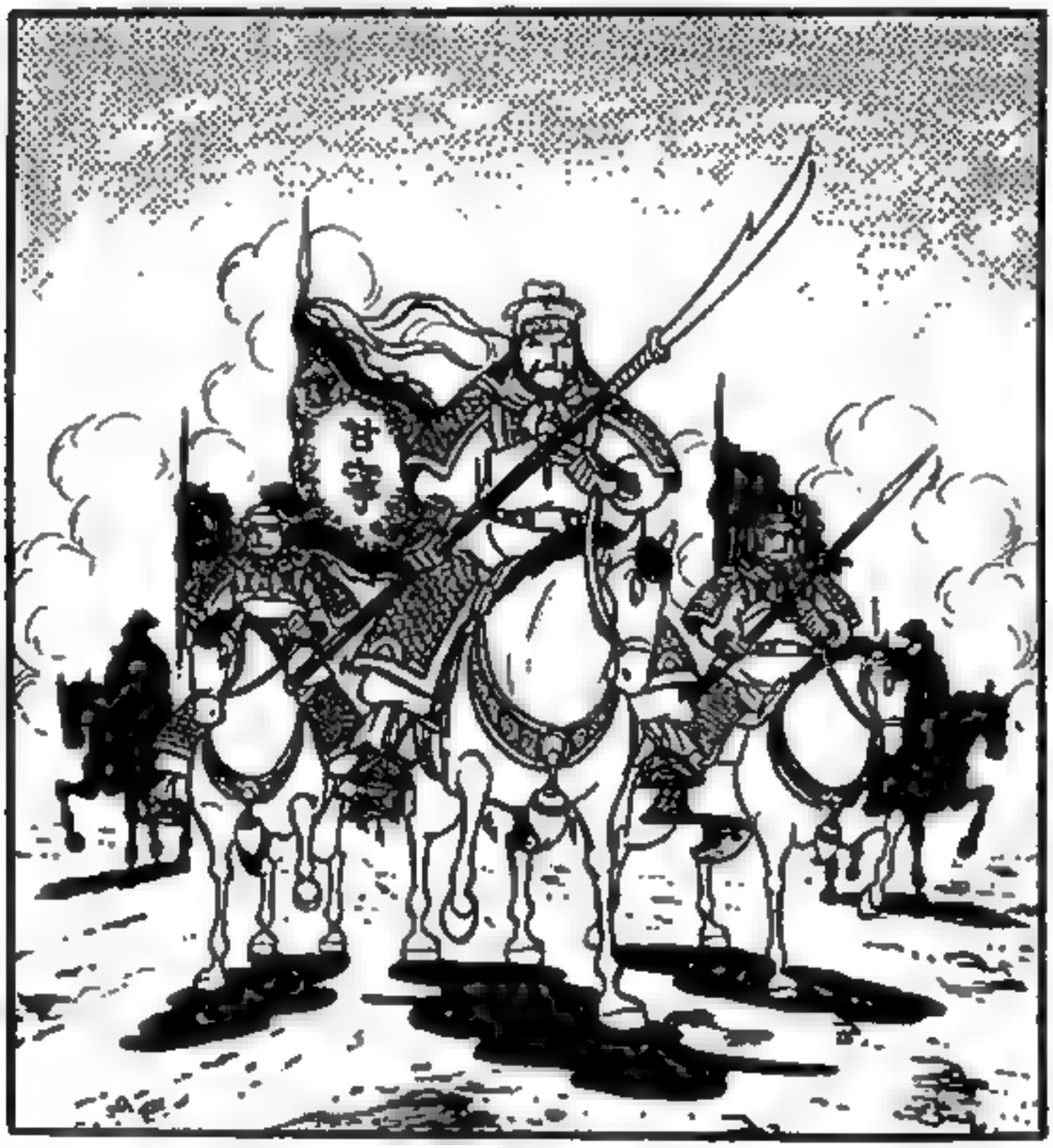
LI DIAN, HIDE BY XIAOYAO FORD AND DESTROY THE XIAOSHI BRIDGE WHEN YOU SEE THE ENEMIES APPROACH. YUE JING AND I WILL FIRST ENGAGE WITH THE ENEMIES.


AND SO ZHANG LIAO, LI DIAN, AND YUE JING, EACH LEADING 2000 TROOPS, CAME FORTH TO CONFRONT THE ENEMIES


ZHANG LIAO, WHO LED THE DEFENCE OF HEFEI LAST TIME, IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED AN AMBUSH STOOD THE HIGHEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS AND DEPLOYED THE TROOPS BY XIAOYAO FORD.


THE WU TROOPS WERE ALREADY ALL BUT ASSURED IN THEIR VICTORY.
GAN NING AND LU MENG LED THE VANGUARD






HERE COMES THE ENEMY...

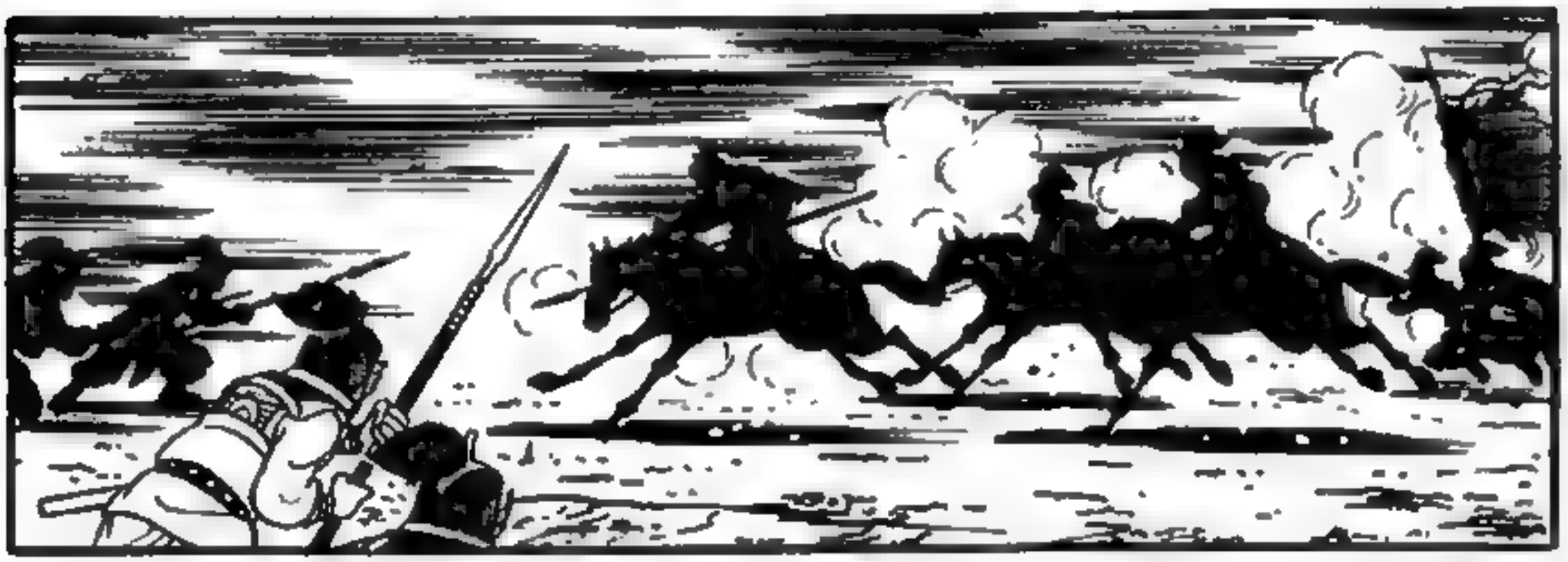

REMEMBER TO RETREAT ONCE I GIVE THE SIGNAL, MEN.

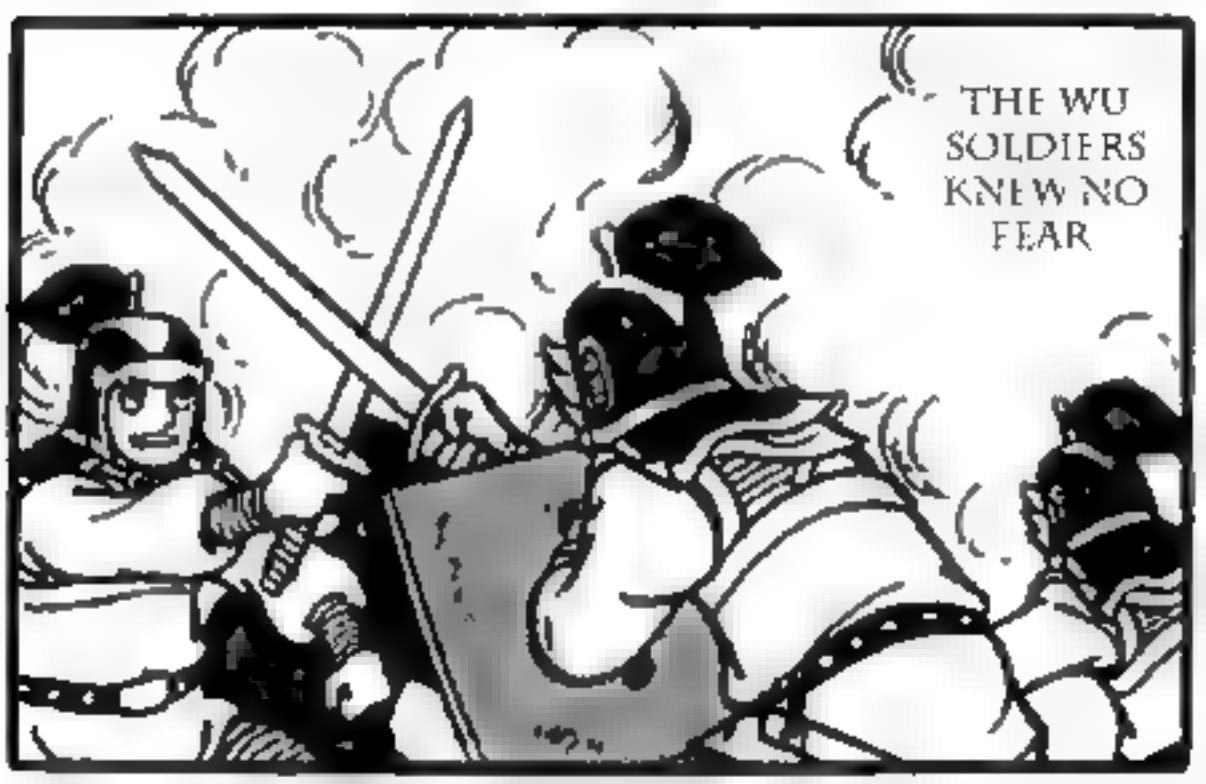


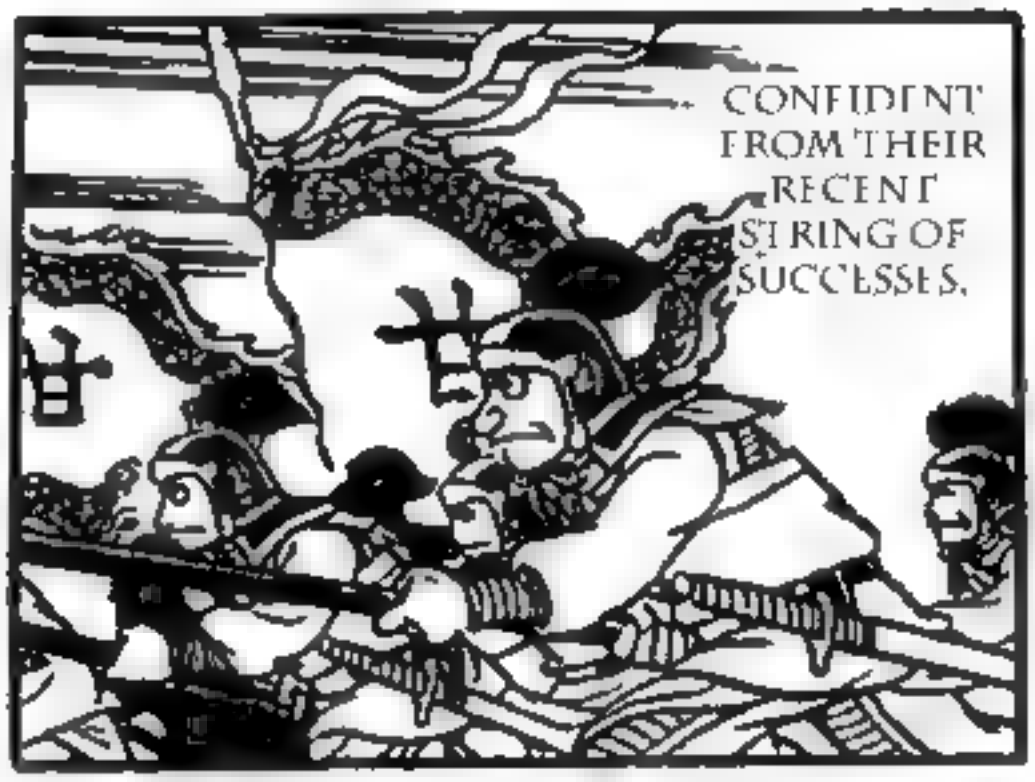

ATTACK!

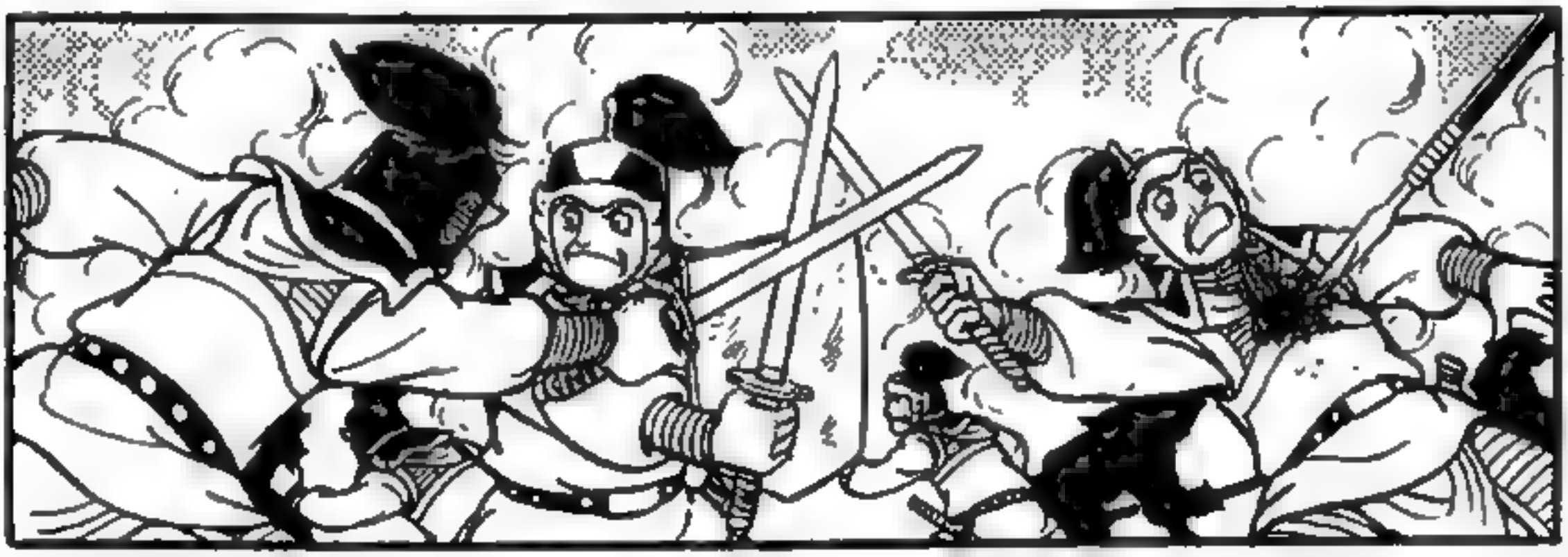

LET'S DEAL WITH THEM ACCORDINGLY, MEN!


AN ENEMY AMBUSH!?



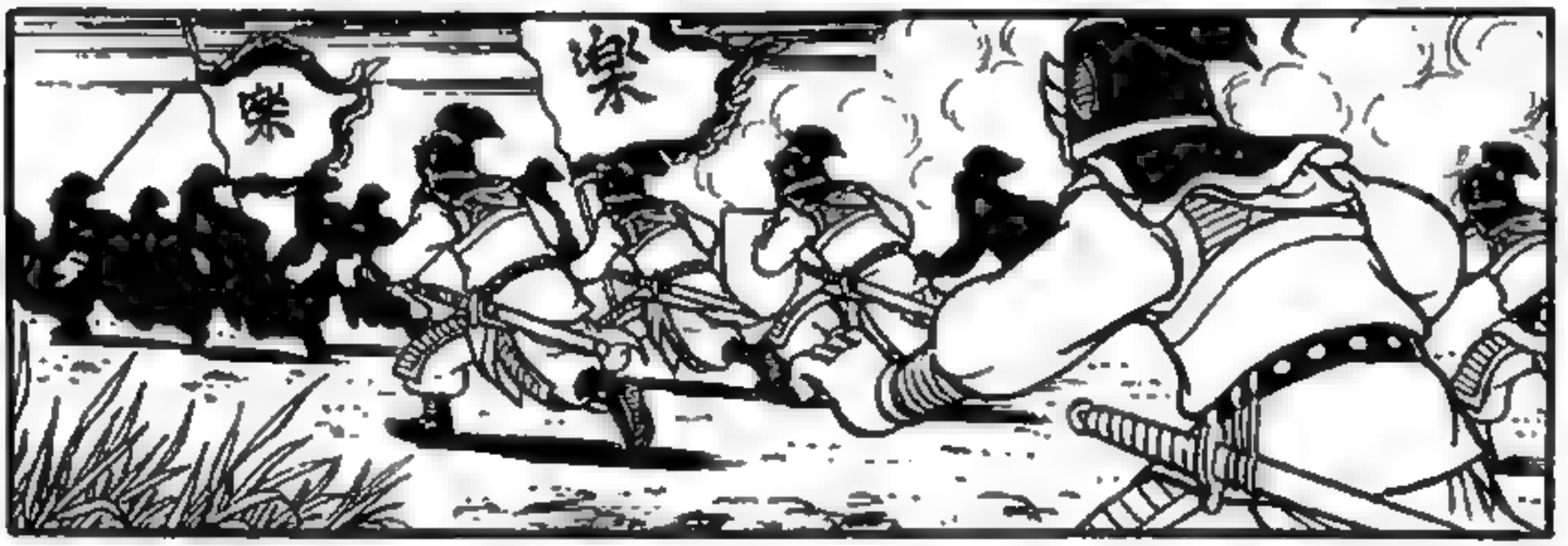

THE WU SOLDIERS KNEW NO FEAR


CONFIDENT FROM THEIR RECENT STRING OF SUCCESSES.



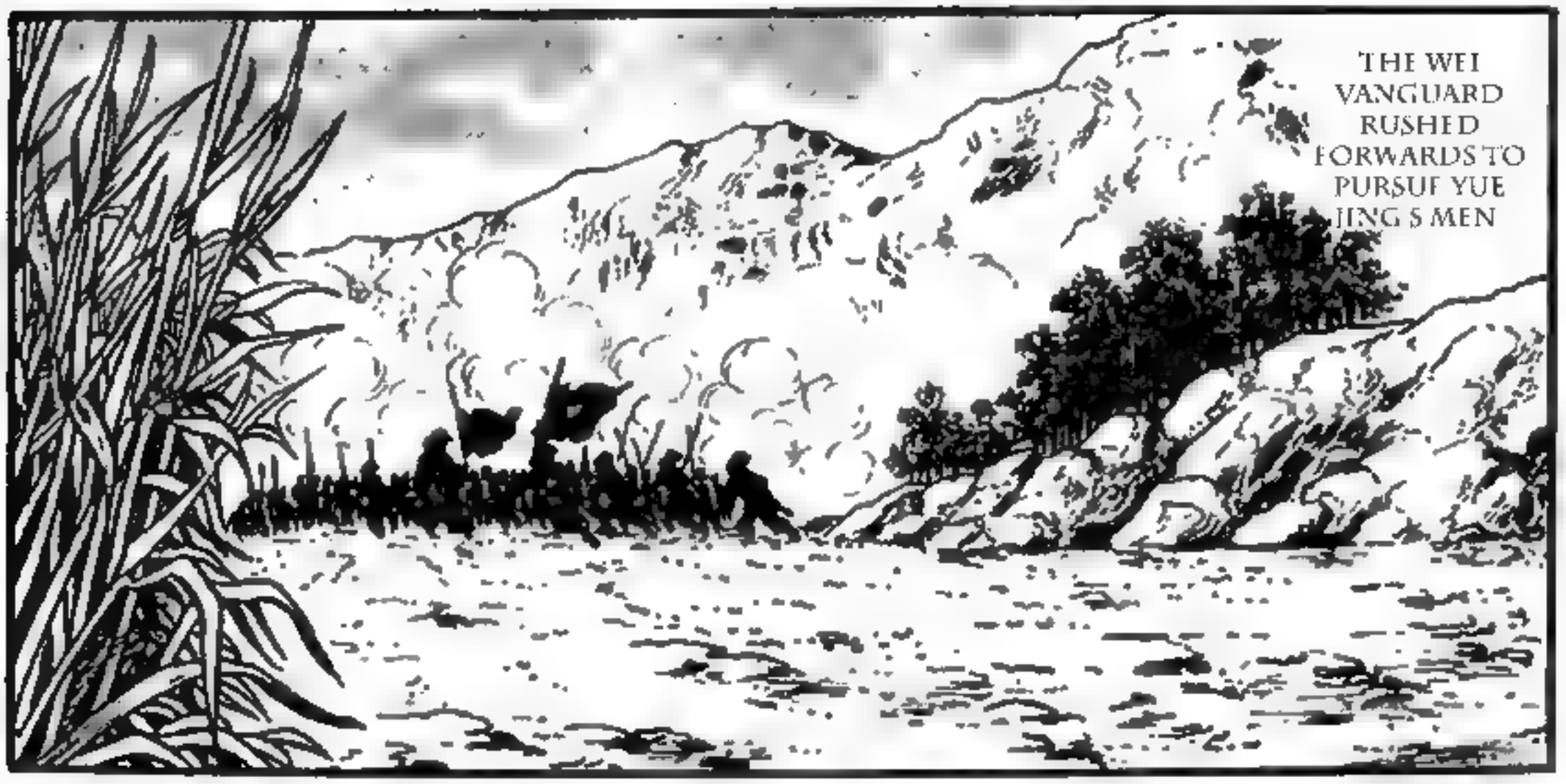

RETREAT!


GOOD, THIS SHOULD DO...

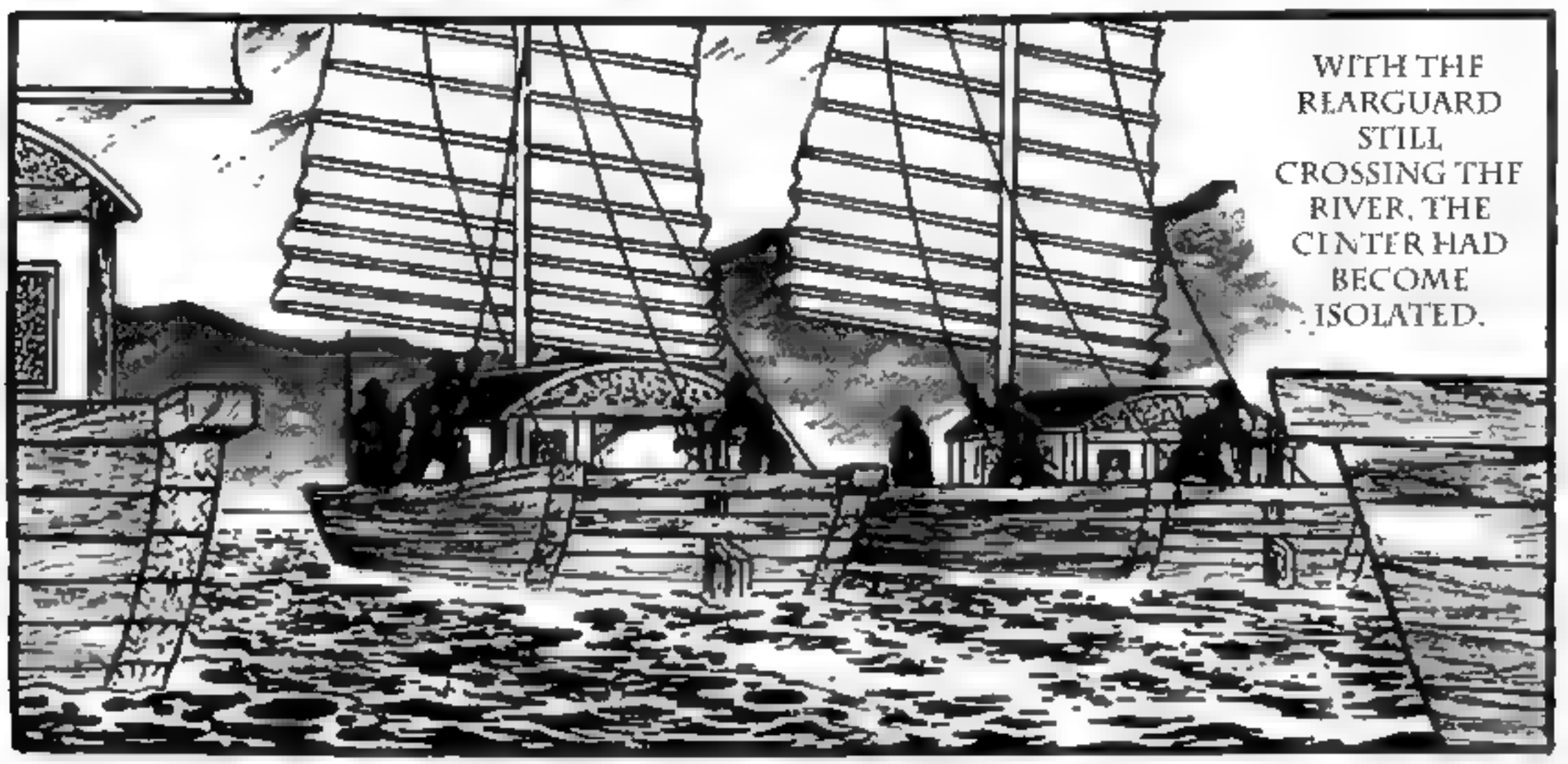

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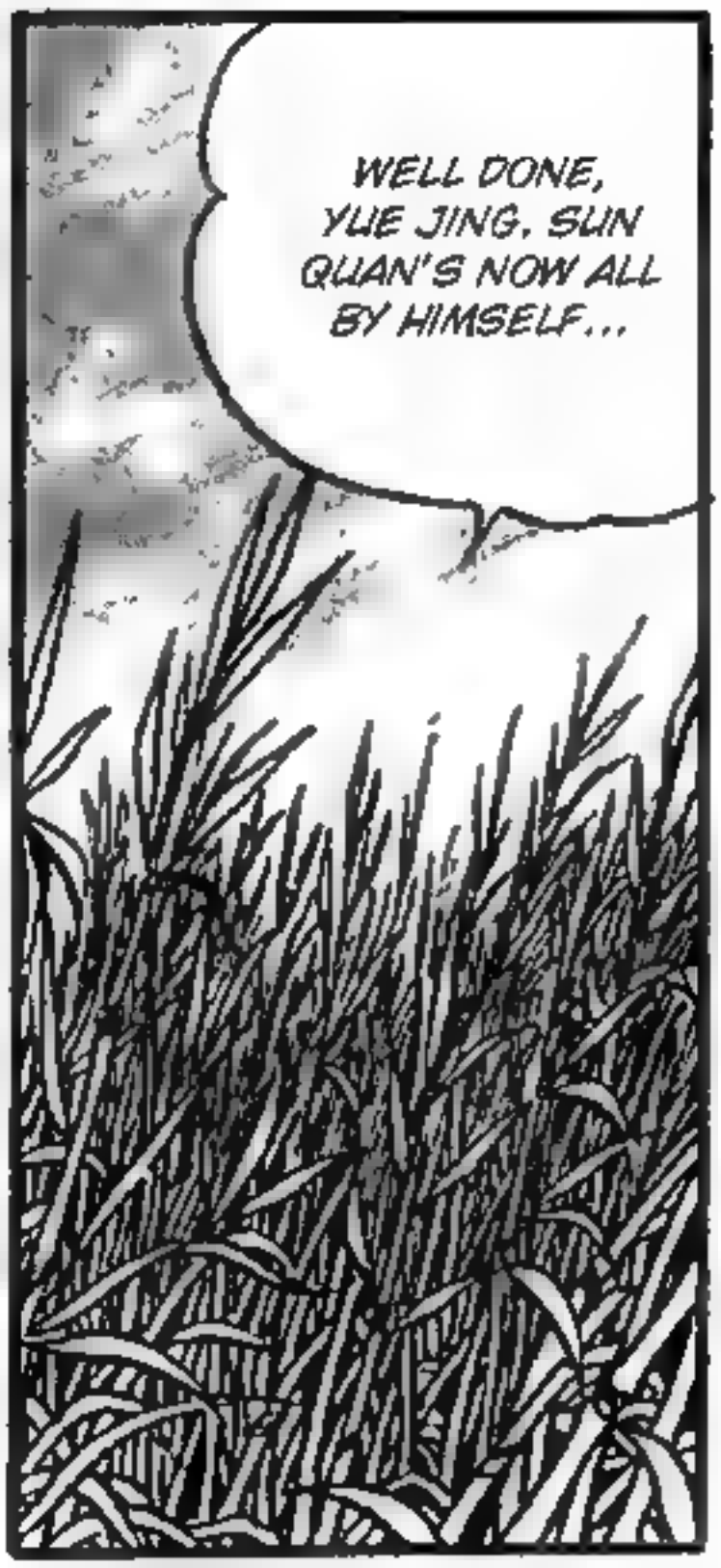

DON'T LET THEM ESCAPE!


THE WEI VANGUARD RUSHED FORWARDS TO PURSUE YUE JING'S MEN


CREATING A WIDE GAP BETWEEN THE VANGUARD AND CENTER, LED BY SUN QUAN.


WITH THE REARGUARD STILL CROSSING THE RIVER, THE CENTER HAD BECOME ISOLATED.


OUR TARGET IS SUN QUAN!
NOW'S OUR CHANCE!


WELL DONE, YUE JING. SUN QUAN'S NOW ALL BY HIMSELF...




IT APPEARS TO BE AN ENEMY AMBUSH.


WHAT'S GOING ON!?

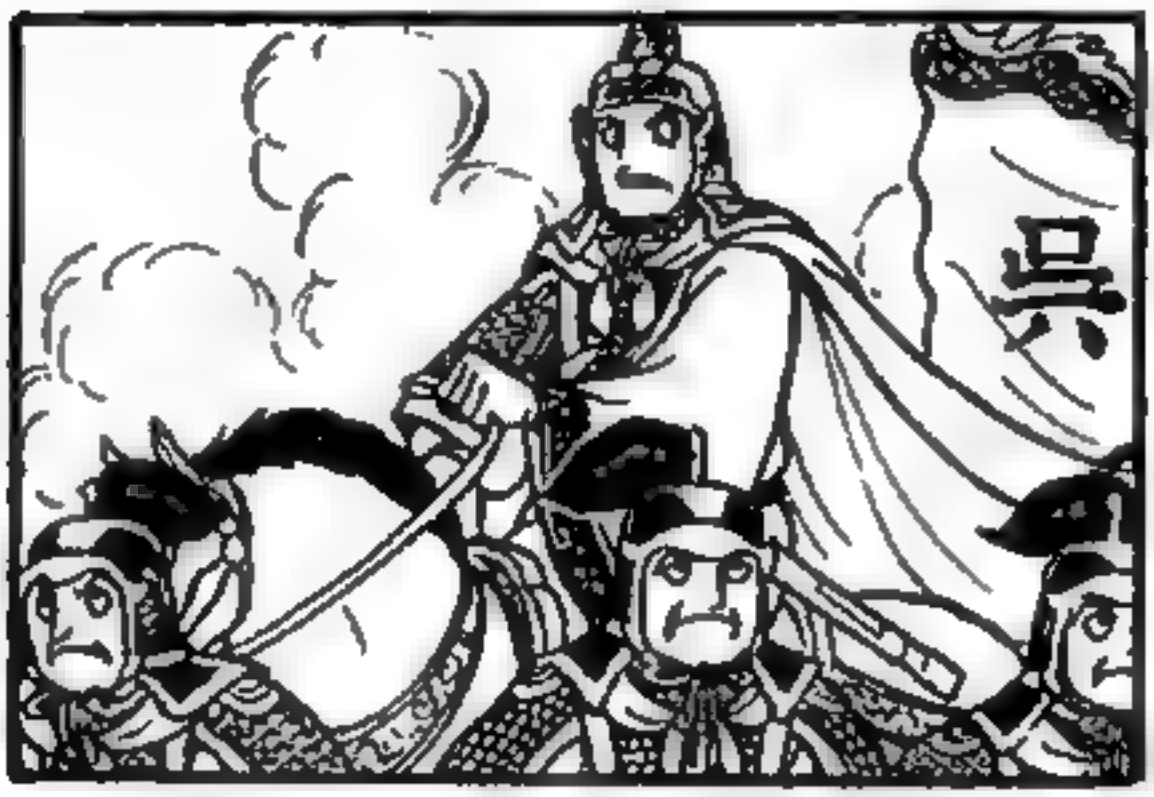



HMPH, IT'S ONLY A FEW THOUSAND AT MOST! KILL THEM ALL!

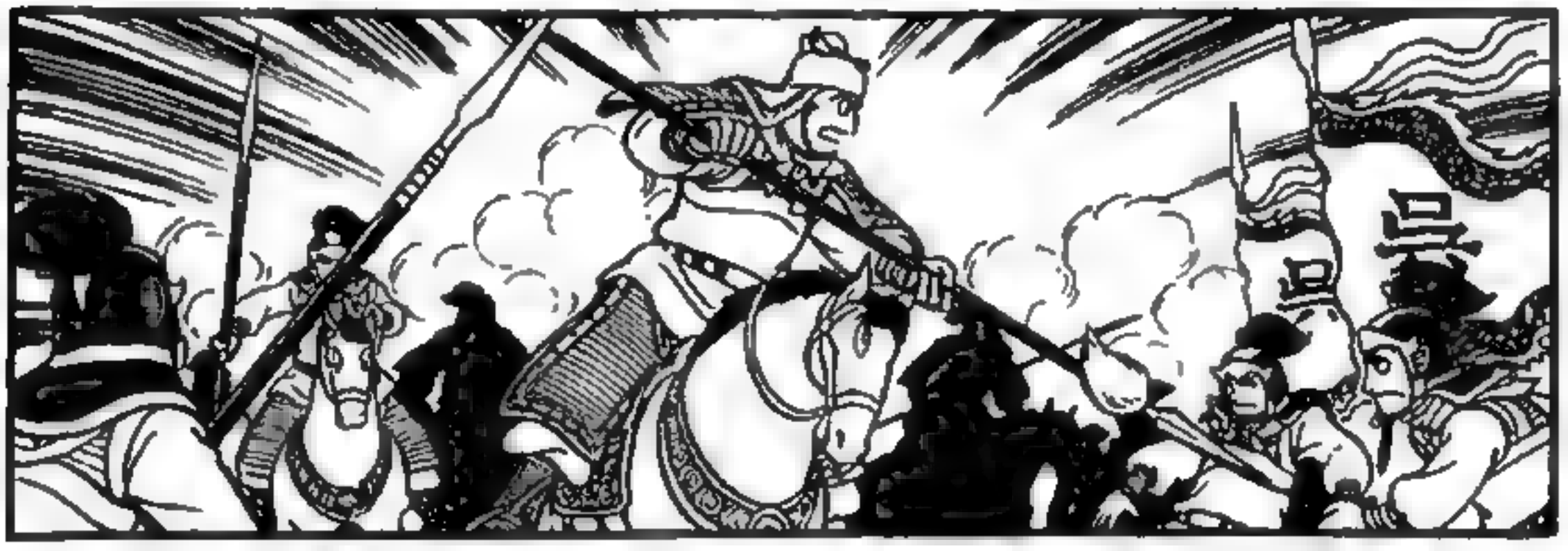
HM?

MY LORD, THE ENEMIES HAVE AMBUSHED OUR RIGHT AS WELL!

AIM FOR SUN QUAN'S HEAD!


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PROTECT OUR LORD!


呉
呉


NGHH!







LING TONG, WHO HAD JUST DISEMBARKED, SENSED SOMETHING WAS WRONG

HM?

ALL MEN WHO'VE CROSSED THE RIVER, FOLLOW ME!

THE CENTER SEEMS DIS-ARRAYED...

AHHH!

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MY LORD!

CROSS THE XIAOSHI BRIDGE AND WITHDRAW FROM HERE, MY LORD. MY MEN SHALL FEND THE ENEMIES OFF IN THE MEANWHILE.

LING TONG!

MY LORD!

STAND FIRM, MEN! HOLD THE ENEMIES OFF WHILE I ESCORT OUR LORD ACROSS XIAOSHI BRIDGE!

THANK YOU.

LING TONG AND I SHALL ESCORT YOU TO THE BRIDGE, MY LORD.

XIAOSHI BRIDGE HAD ALREADY BEEN DISMANTLED BY LI DIAN.

AHH!

JUST FOLLOW MY LEAD, MY LORD.

THERE'S NO CAUSE FOR PANIC.

CURSES, WHAT DO WE NOW!?

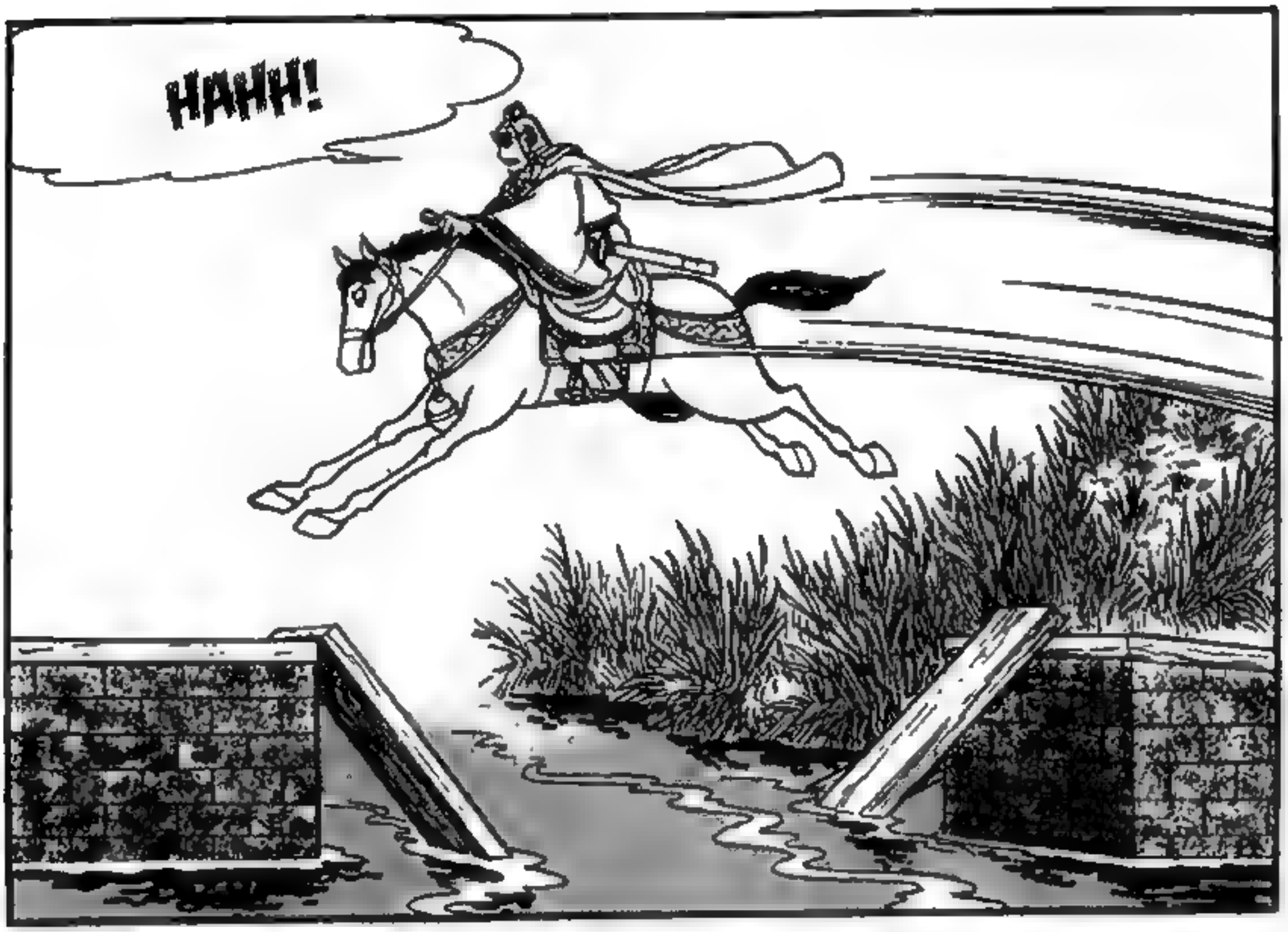
EASY THERE...

HAHH!

LEAP ACROSS AS I DID NOW, MY LORD.

YES.

EASY THERE...


HAHH!


SPLENDID.

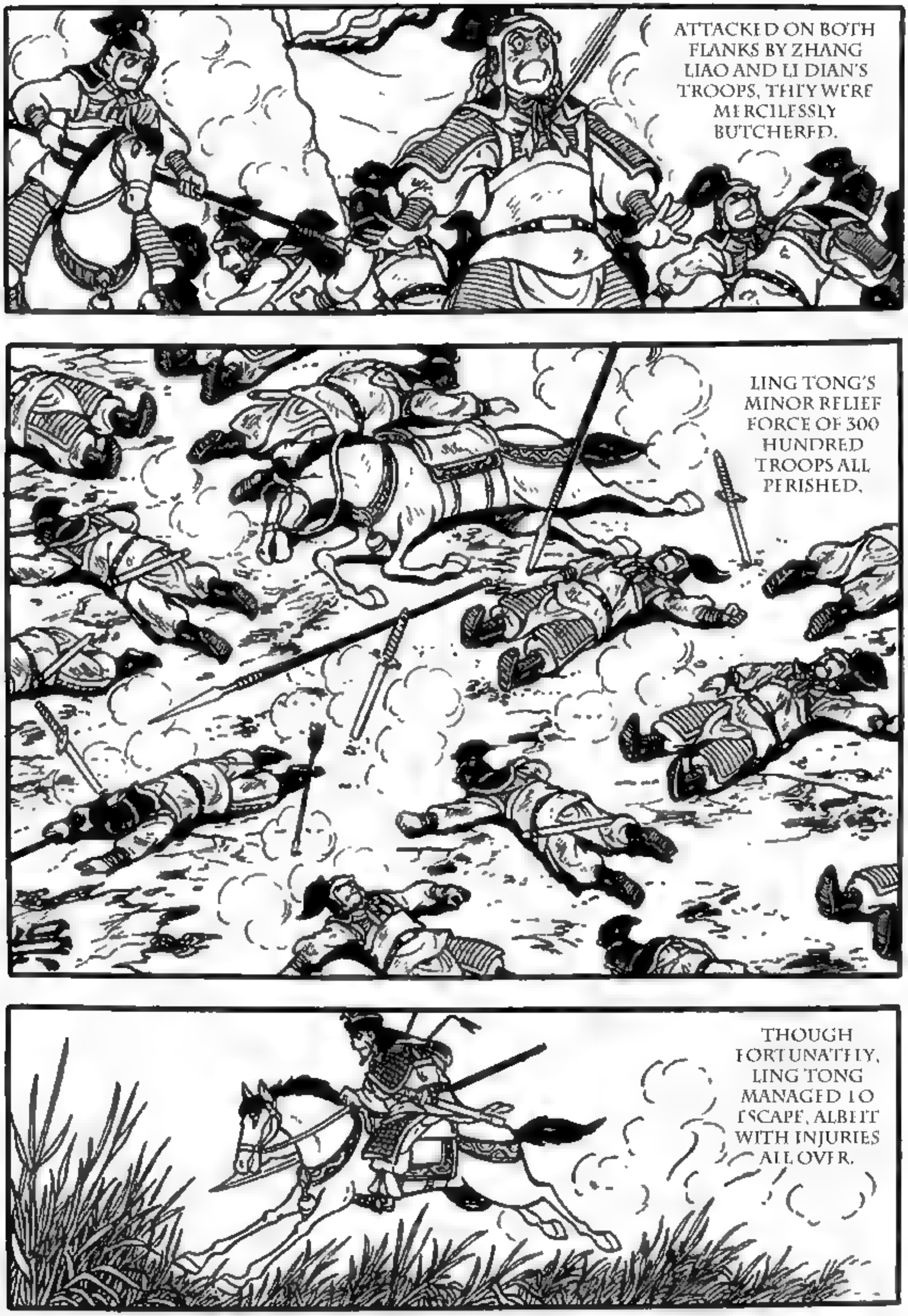

I MUST RETURN TO FIGHT SO I'LL ENTURST OUR LORD IN YOUR HANDS.



LET US HEAD BACK TO OUR SHIPS AT THE RIVER.

I SHALL PROTECT HIM WITH MY LIFE.

BEHIND, THE WU CENTER HAD COLLAPSED.


ATTACKED ON BOTH FLANKS BY ZHANG LIAO AND LI DIAN'S TROOPS, THEY WERE MERCILESSLY BUTCHERED.
LING TONG'S MINOR RELIEF FORCE OF 300 HUNDRED TROOPS ALL PERISHED.
THOUGH FORTUNATELY, LING TONG MANAGED TO ESCAPE, ALBEIT WITH INJURIES ALL OVER.

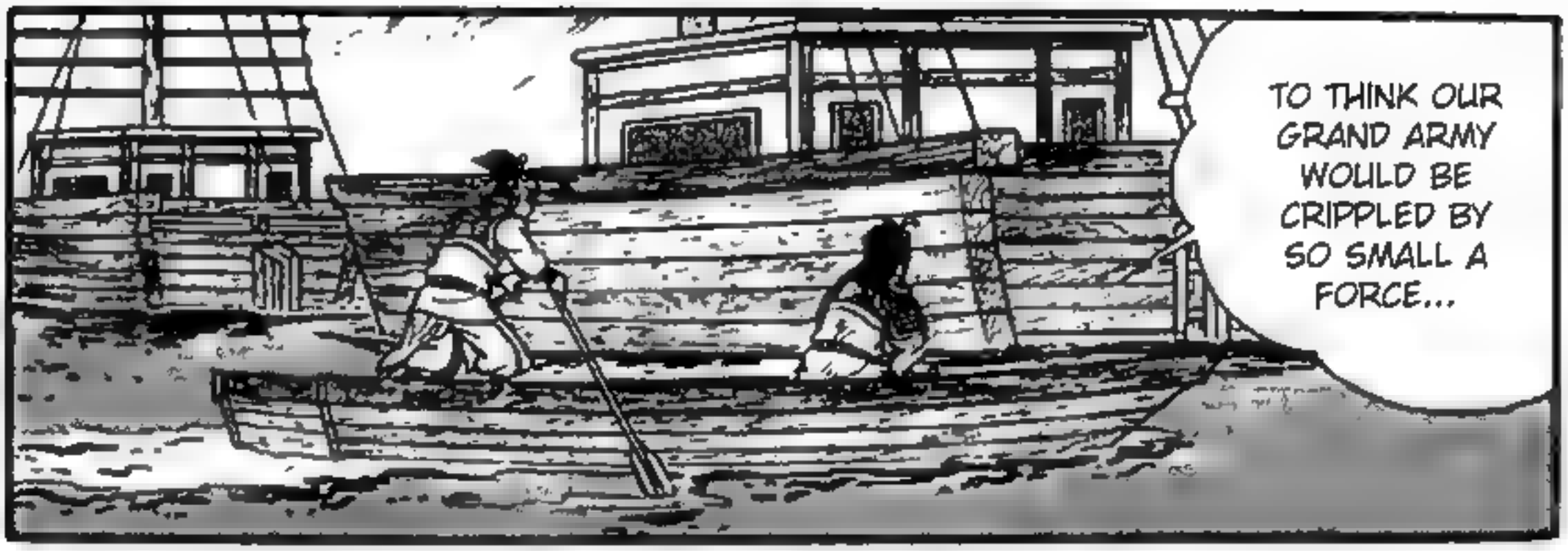
AHH! ISN'T THAT LING TONG!?

YES, SIR!

SOMEONE, GO PICK HIM UP!

THANK YOU... I ASSUME OUR LORD IS WELL?

THIS WAY, GENERAL!


TO THINK OUR GRAND ARMY WOULD BE CRIPPLED BY SO SMALL A FORCE...


GAN NING AND LU MENG ALSO LED THE VANGUARD BACK TO THE SOUTHERN SHORE AND CROSSED THE RIVER ONCE THEY REALIZED THE FATE OF THE CENTER.


BUT THOSE SLOW ON THEIR FEET WERE KILLED BY THE PURSUING WEI FORCES.

THE DEAD WU TROOPS WERE STREWN ALL ACROSS THE BATTLEFIELD.

OUR SWIFT CAPTURE OF HUANCHENG LAID THE FOUNDATION TO OUR DEFEAT TODAY. WE UNDERESTIMATED OUR ENEMIES FAR TOO MUCH.

HOW... HOW COULD THIS BE...

YES... I SHALL NEVER FORGET THIS LESSON.

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE A LORD TO MILLIONS. PLEASE VALUE YOUR LIFE DEEPLY AND BE PRUDENT IN ALL FUTURE ACTIONS.

AFTER THE DISASTROUS DEFEAT AT XIAOYAO FORD, THE WU ARMY HAD TO RETREAT ALL THE WAY TO RUXU IN ORDER TO REGROUP

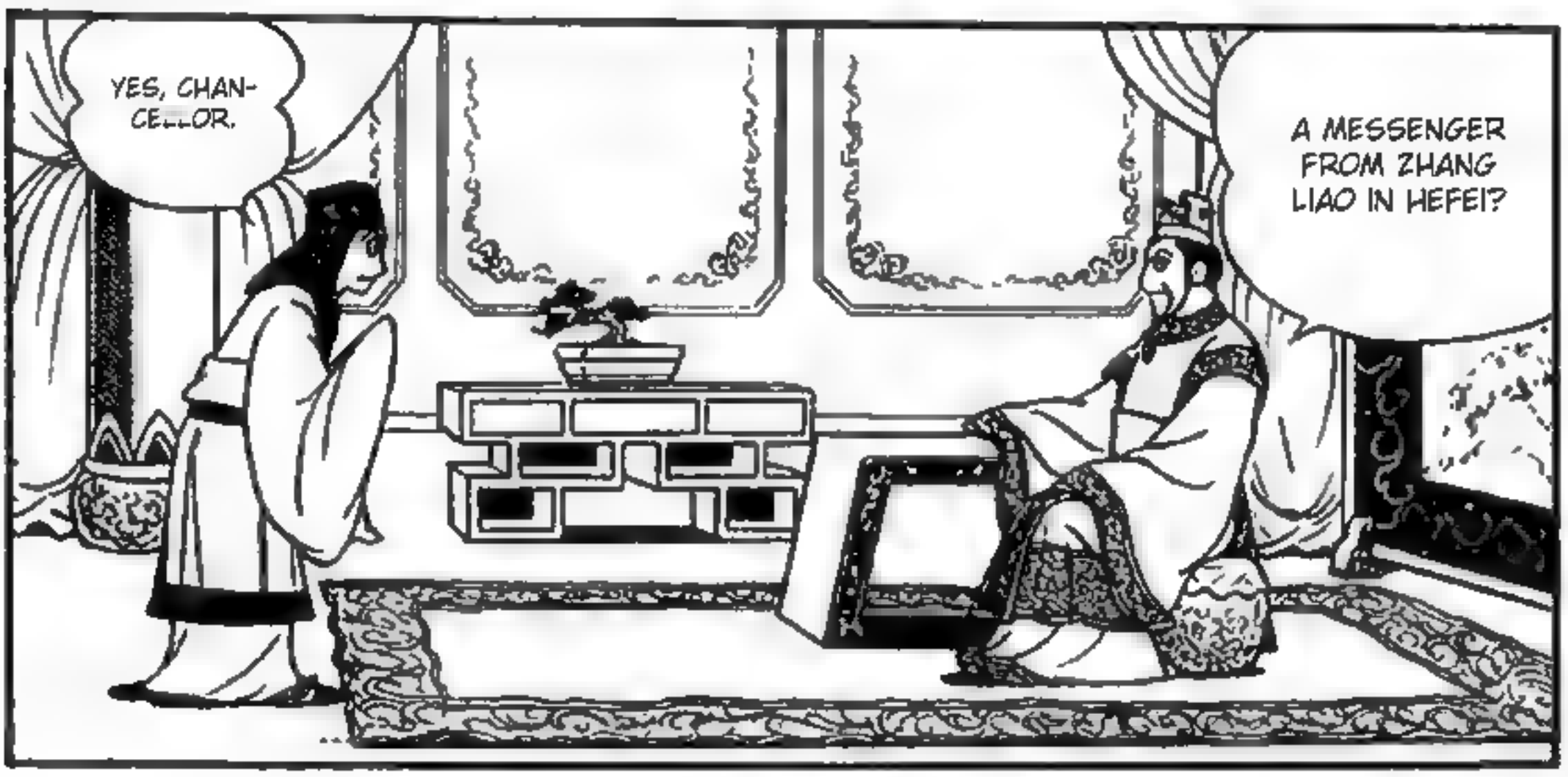
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SUCH INSTANCES OF A SMALL FORCE BEATING A MORE NUMEROUS ONE IS NOT UNCOMMON IN THE HISTORY OF WAR

IN JAPAN, THE BATTLE OF OKEHAZAMA SERVES AS THE MOST FAMOUS EXAMPLE, IN WHICH 3000 ODA TROOPS ROUTED THE 30,000-STRONG IMAGAWA FORCES.

400,000 WEI ARMY





YES, SIR.

FINE, LET HIM THROUGH.

NOT AT ALL, CHANCELLOR. I BRING YOU A LETTER FROM GENERAL ZHANG LIAO.

THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE LONG JOURNEY HERE.

HERE IT IS, SIR.

SHOW ME.

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

HMM...

IT'S ABOUT WU.

ANOTHER ASSAULT ON HEFEI...?

ZHANG LIAO REPORTS THAT SUN QUAN IS MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR ANOTHER ATTACK.

HEFEI IS A CRITICAL CITY THAT GUARDS WEI'S SOUTHERN BORDERS. LOSING IT TO WU WILL COMPROMISE OUR DEFENSES.

YES... ZHANG LIAO SUCCESSFULLY FENDED OFF THE LAST ATTEMPT WITH A PRE-EMPTIVE AMBUSH BUT THAT WON'T WORK A SECOND TIME.

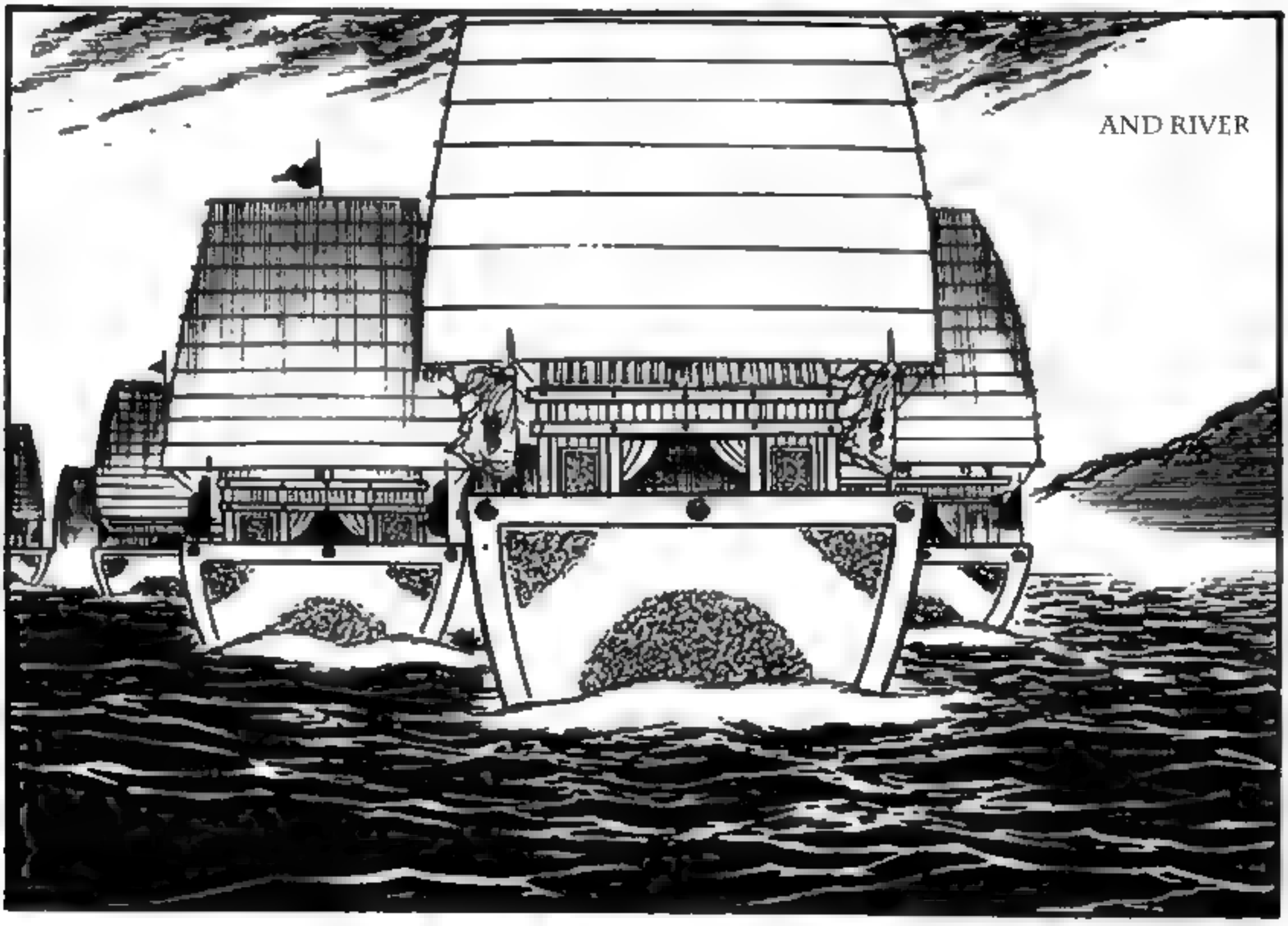
SHU HAS PLENTY OF MANPOWER AND DEFENSIBLE TERRAIN. IT WILL TAKE TIME TO PLAN AND CARRY OUT ITS INVASION.

THEN WHAT ABOUT SHU?

ALRIGHT THEN. IT'S TIME I FINALLY PAID THOSE SOUTH-ERNERS BACK FOR RED CLIFFS!

IT'D BE PREFER-ABLE TO CONQUER THE SOUTHLANDS ONCE AND FOR ALL WHILE WU'S STILL REGROUPING AFTER THE FAILED ATTACK ON HEFEI.


AND SO CAO CAO MOBILIZED A GRAND ARMY OF 400 000 BY LAND,


AND RIVER

RUXU

YES, SIR.

WHAT!? 400,000 TROOPS!?

I SUGGEST WE STRIKE FIRST TO WEAKEN ENEMY MORALE WHILE THEY'RE STILL EXHAUSTED FROM THE LONG MARCH.

IT SEEMS THE FATE OF WU IS IN JEOPARDY ONCE MORE.

XU SHENG! DONG XI!

YES.

TAKE A FLEET OF 50 WARSHIPS AND GUARD RUXU'S PORT!

YES?

AT YOUR SERVICE.

YES?

CHEN WU!

NOW THEN... WHO CAN I ASK TO BREAK THE ENEMIES' MORALE WHILE THEY'VE YET TO RECOVER FROM THEIR FATIGUE?

YES, MY LORD.

PATROL UP AND DOWN THE YANGTZE AND KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE ENEMIES!

AH, OF COURSE, LING TONG. HOW MANY MEN WILL YOU NEED?

ALLOW ME, MY LORD...

3000? HA! I CAN GET THE SAME JOB DONE WITH ONLY A HUNDRED HORSEMEN!

3000 WILL DO JUST FINE IN BREAKING ANY ILLUSION THAT THE SOUTHLANDS WILL BE EASY TO CONQUER.

I ONLY CLAIM WHAT I AM CAPABLE OF.

DON'T GET COCKY NOW JUST BECAUSE YOU WERE THE FIRST ONE TO SCALE THE WALLS AT HUANCHENG!

WHAT!

LING TONG! GAN NING! THAT'S ENOUGH. I DON'T WANT ANY ARGUMENTS HERE.

YES, SIR.

YES, SIR.

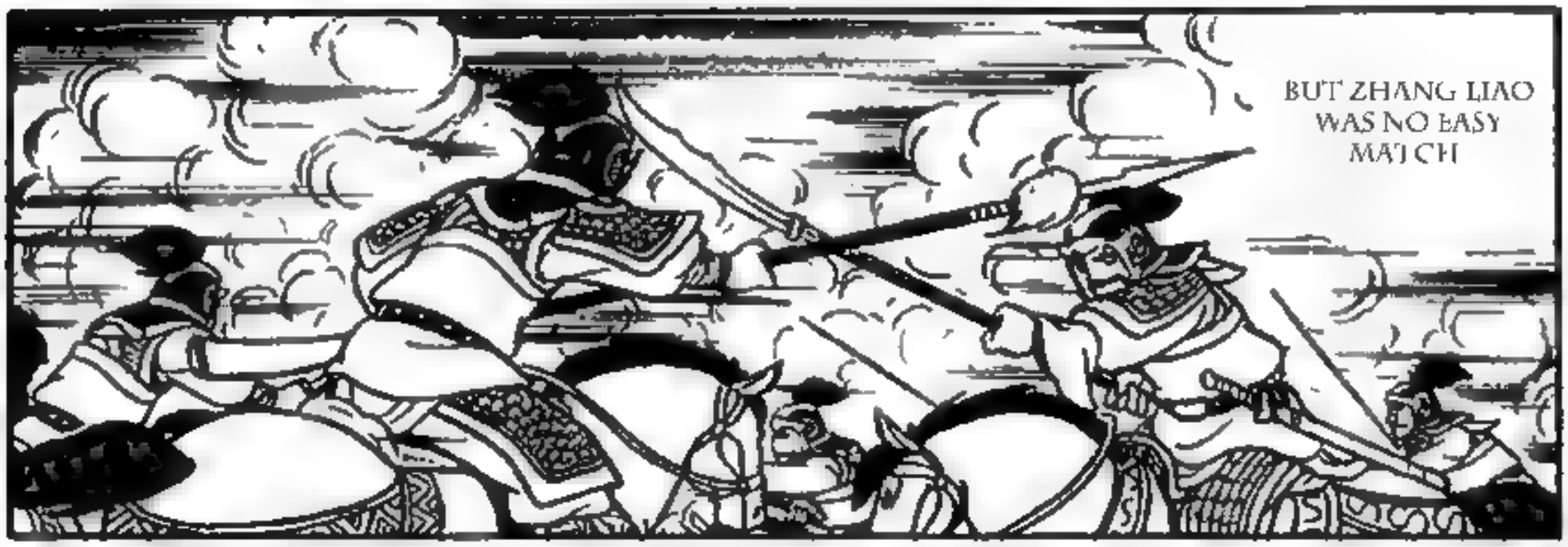
LING TONG! I SHALL GIVE YOU 3000 TROOPS FOR THE TASK. SHOULD YOU FAIL, GAN NING WILL GET HIS TURN.

AND SO LING TONG LED A FORCE OF 3000 OUT FROM RUXU

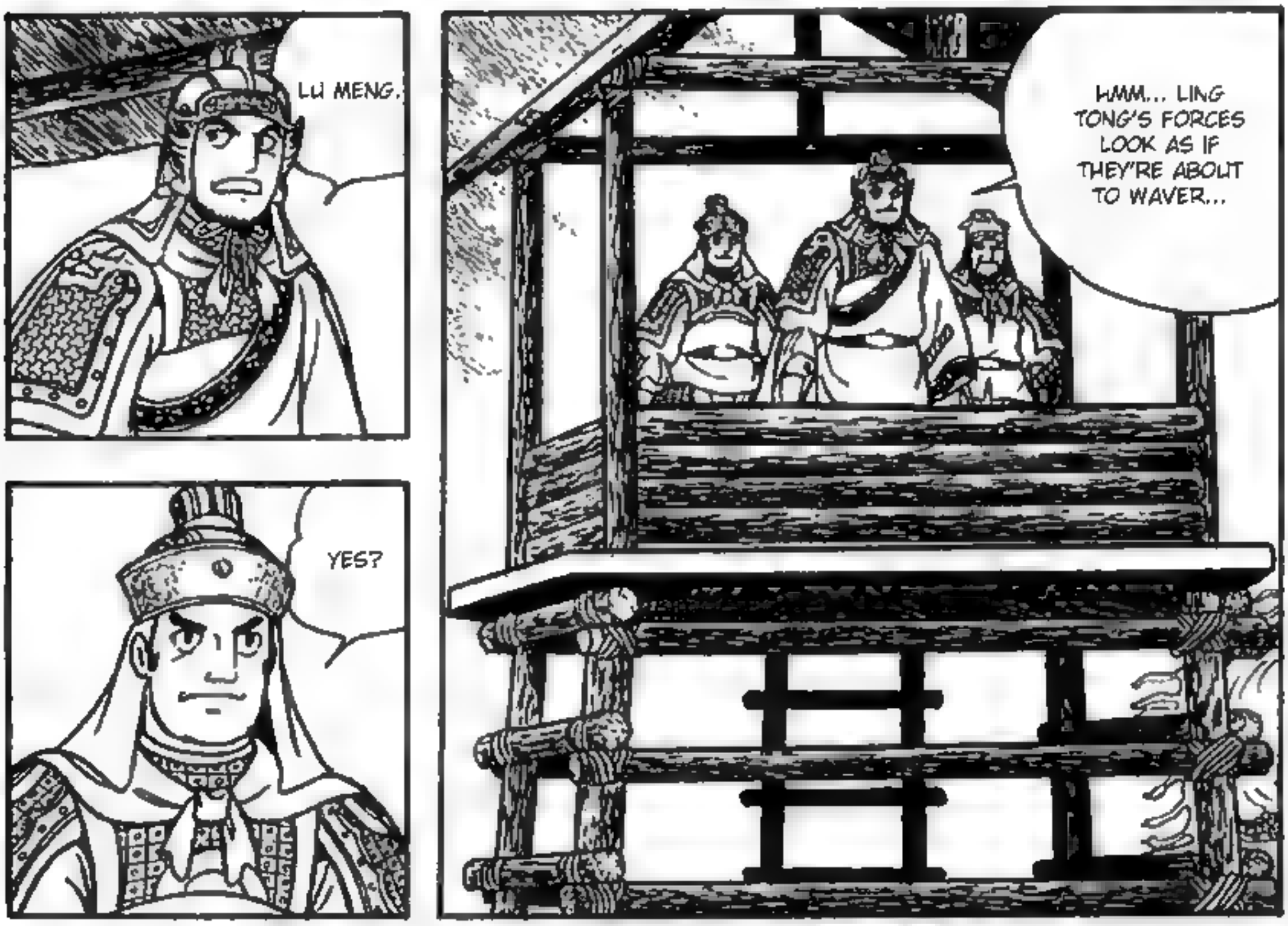
SUN QUAN AND HIS GENERALS FOLLOWED SHORTLY AFTERWARDS.

TO SET UP DEFENSIVE LINES AND AWAIT CAO CAO'S ARMY

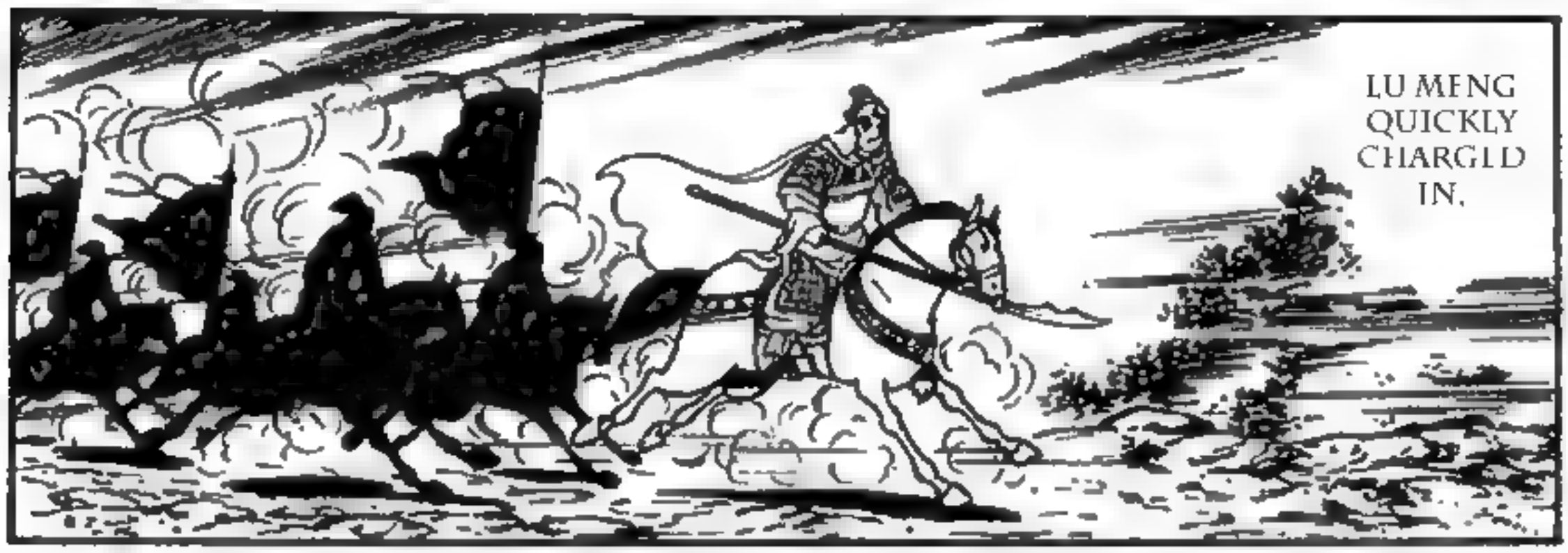

BEFORE LONG CAO CAO'S VANGUARD ARRIVED AT RUXU
LEADING IT WAS THE REDOUBTABLE ZHANG LIAO
LING TONG CHARGED HEAD-ON AT ZHANG LIAO'S FORCES

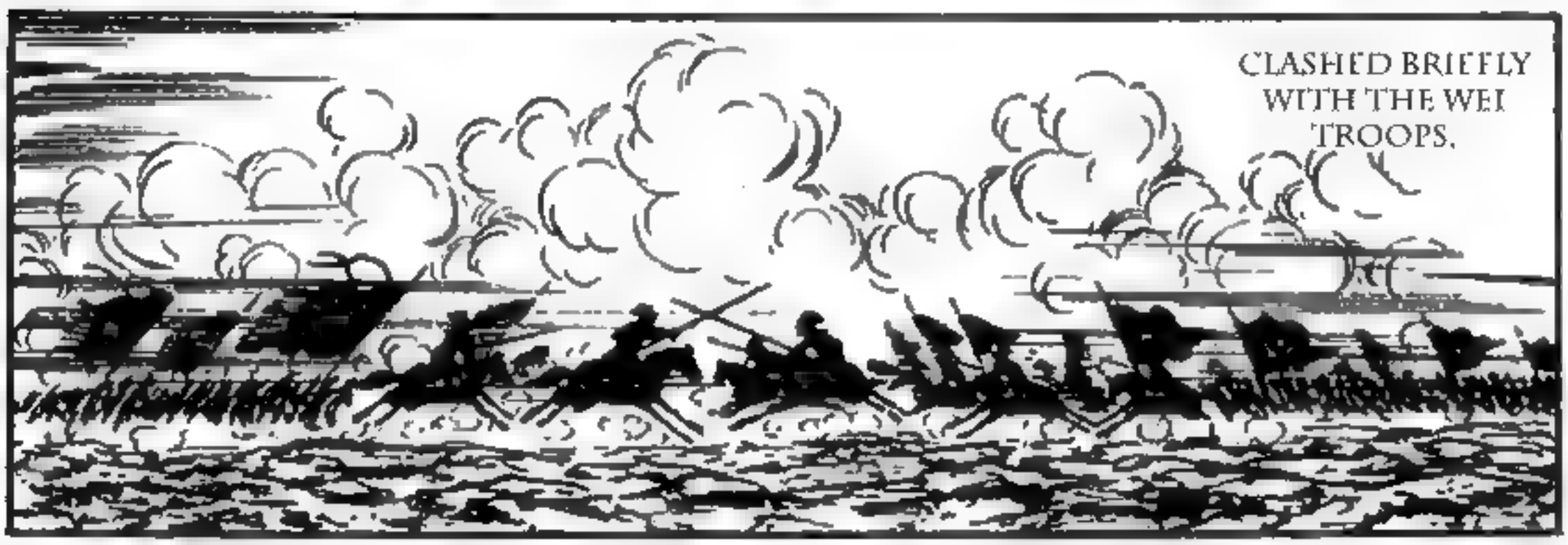

BUT ZHANG LIAO WAS NO EASY MATCH


AFTER SOME TIME LING TONG'S TROOPS SEEMED TO BE LOSING GROUND


LU MENG.
YES?
HMM... LING TONG'S FORCES LOOK AS IF THEY'RE ABOUT TO WAVER...


YES, SIR.
HELP SAFELY WITHDRAW JING TONG'S TROOPS!


LU MENG QUICKLY CHARGED IN.


CLASHED BRIEFLY WITH THE WEI TROOPS.


BEFORE WITHDRAWING BACK TO BASE WITH LING TONG.

HUNDRED HORSEMEN



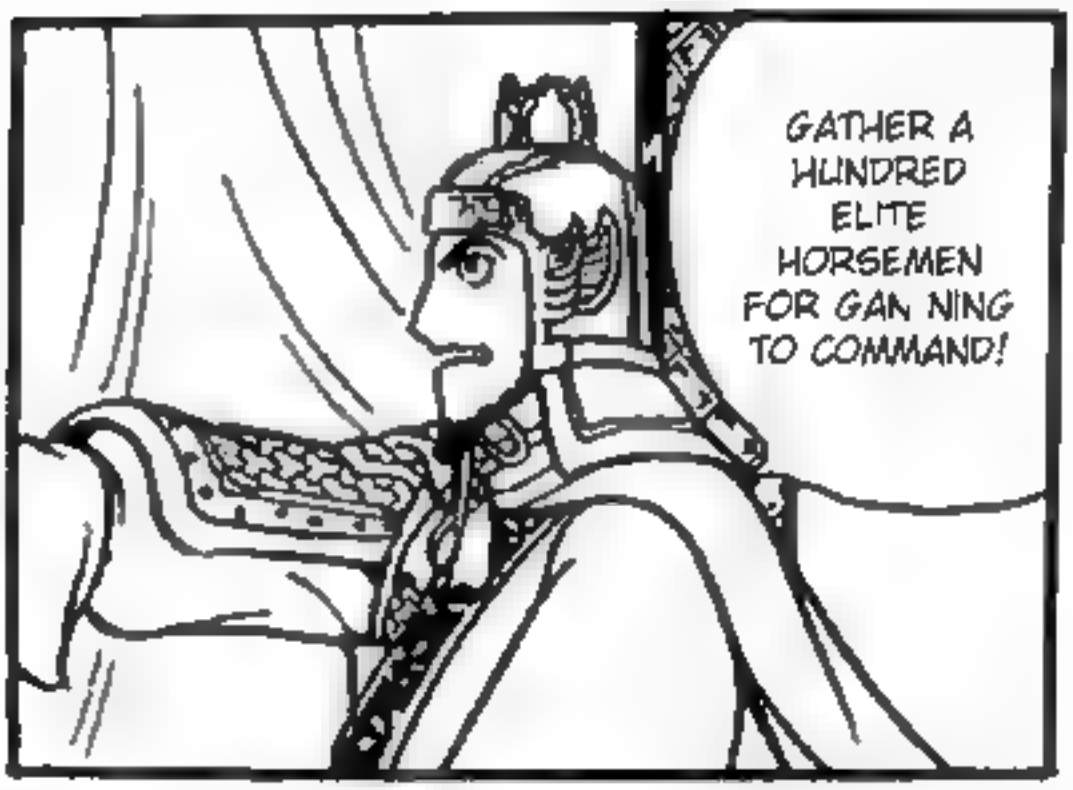


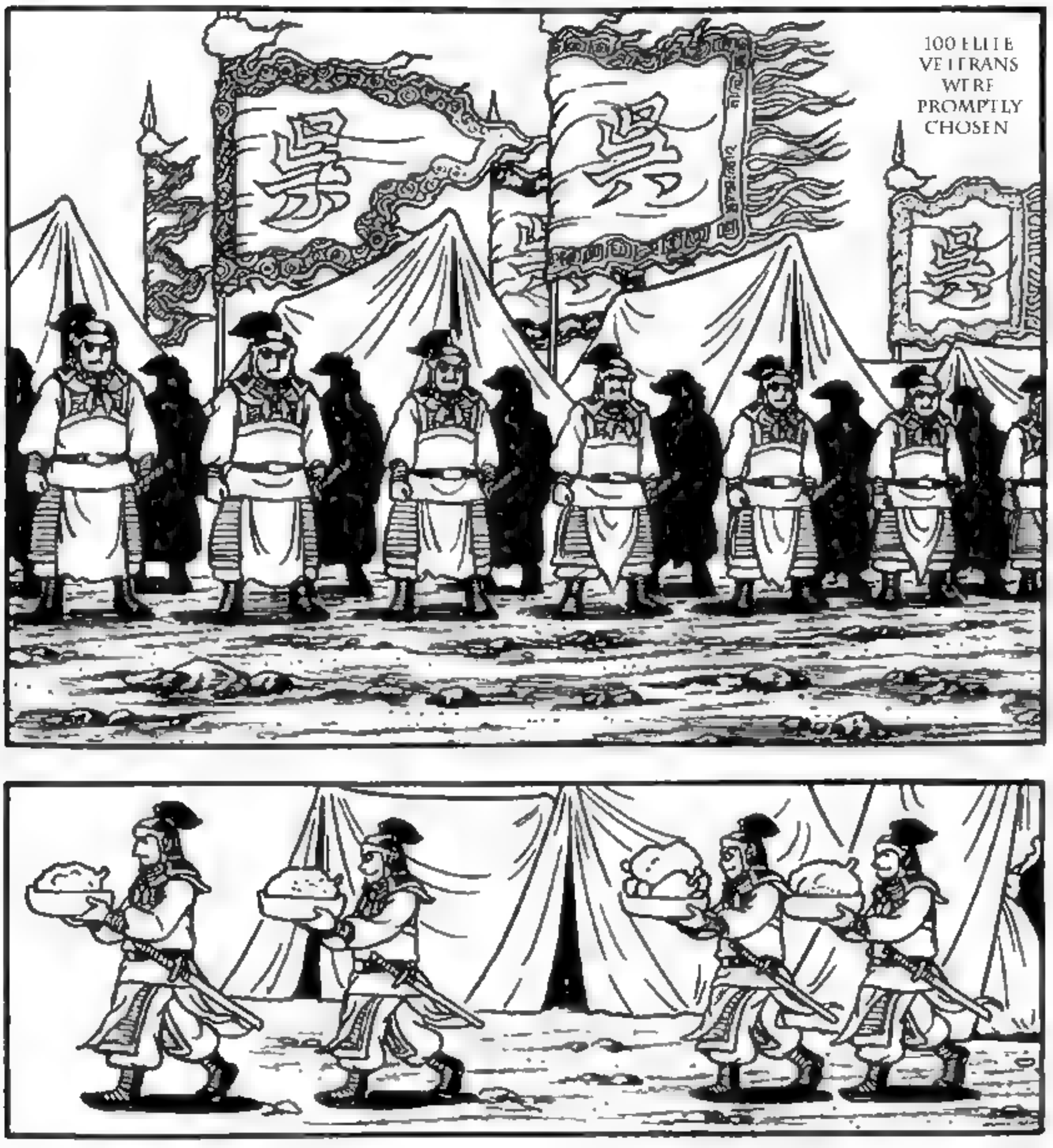







YES, SIR.


GATHER A HUNDRED ELITE HORSEMEN FOR GAN NING TO COMMAND!


100 ELITE VETERANS WERE PROMPTLY CHOSEN

HELP YOURSELF TO SOME FINE WINE AND MEAT, MEN!

?

?

BUT I AIN'T ONE TO DISOBEY MY SUPERIORS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY TELL ME TO EAT AND DRINK!

BEATS ME.

WHAT'S THE OCCASION?

THANK YOU, GENERAL.

EAT TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT!

NO NEED FOR RESTRAINTS. DRINK UP!

GULP!

PFFT!!!

THE HUNDRED OF US WILL RAID THE ENEMY BASE TONIGHT SO LET US ENJOY THIS DINNER WITH NO REGRETS.

B-BUT...

THAT'S CORRECT. RAIDING WITH A LARGER FORCE WILL ONLY MAKE IT HARDER TO HIDE OUR APPROACH AND RETREAT.

J-J-JUST US 100 MEN...!? INTO A DEN OF 400,000!?

THIS IS SUICIDE...

SO HOW CAN YOU YOUNG MEN, WITH LESS TO LOSE THAN I HAVE, HESITATE!?

I, A HIGH-RANKING GENERAL, WILL ALSO BE ATTACKING TONIGHT WITH NO REGARDS TO MY LIFE! WHY!? FOR WU, OF COURSE!

WE WILL ACCOMPANY YOU TO THE VERY DEPTHS OF HELL, IF NEED BE.

OUR APOLOGIES, SIR.

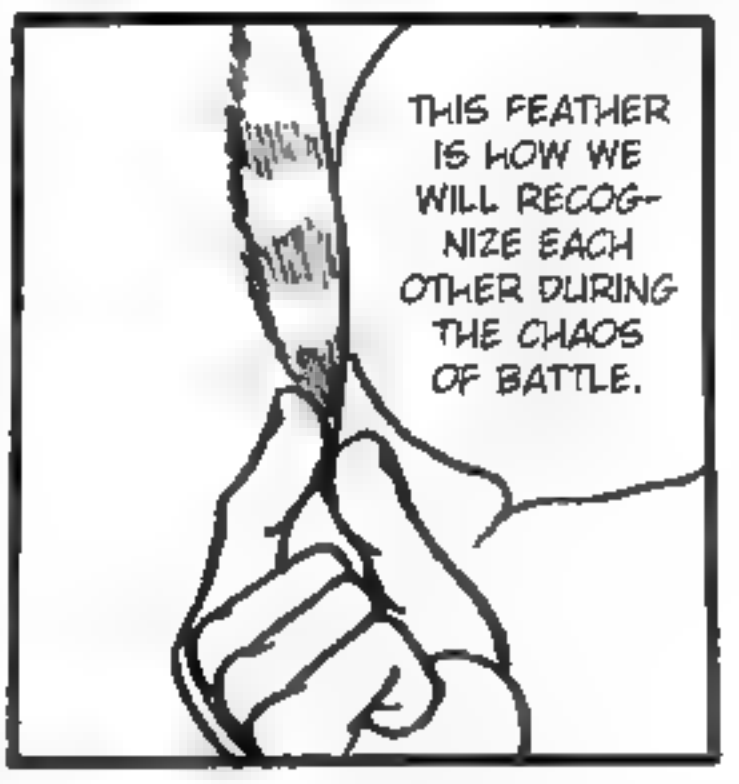
BRING OUT THE GOOSE PLUMES!

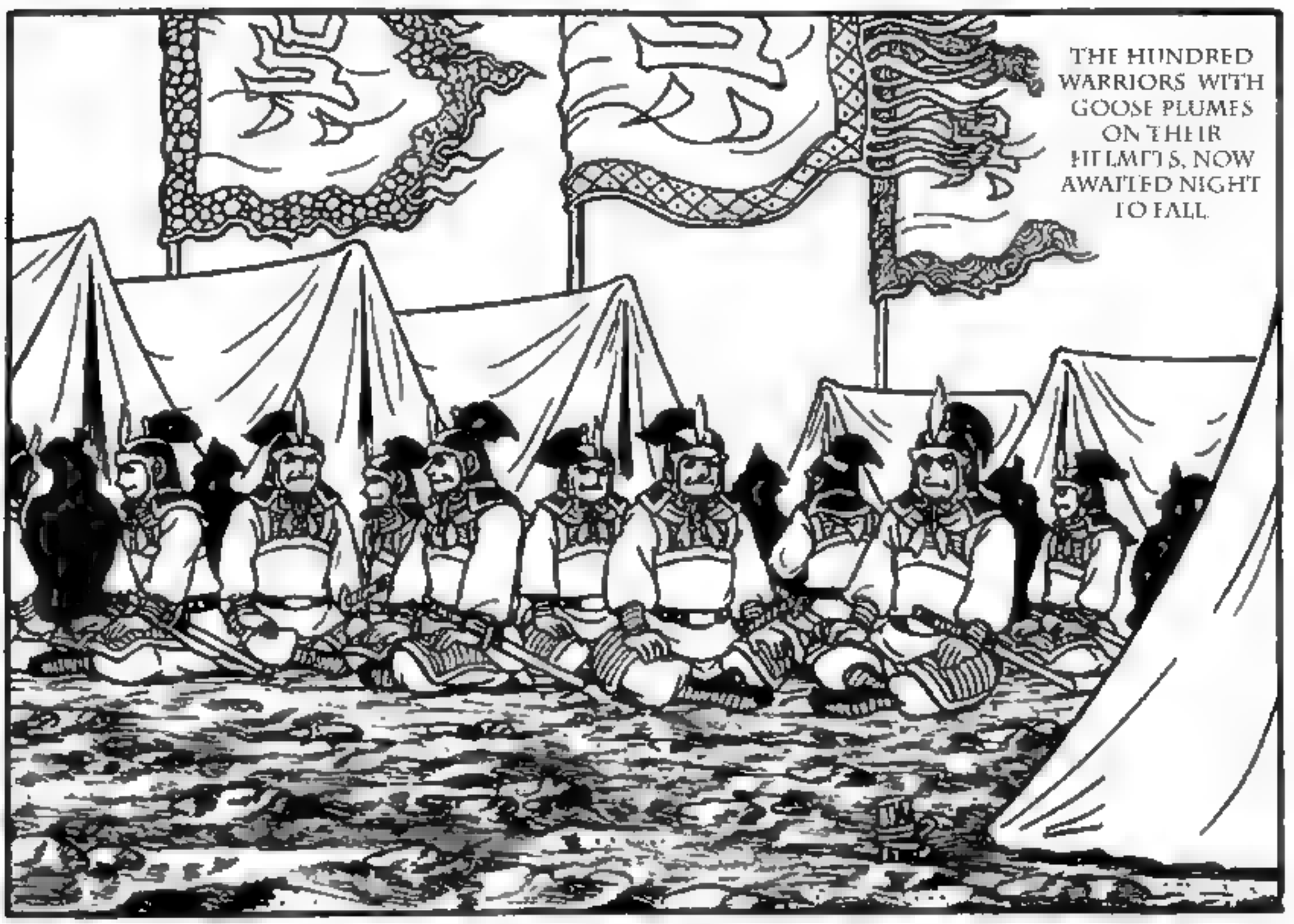
YES, THAT IS HOW THE MEN OF WU SHOULD ACT.

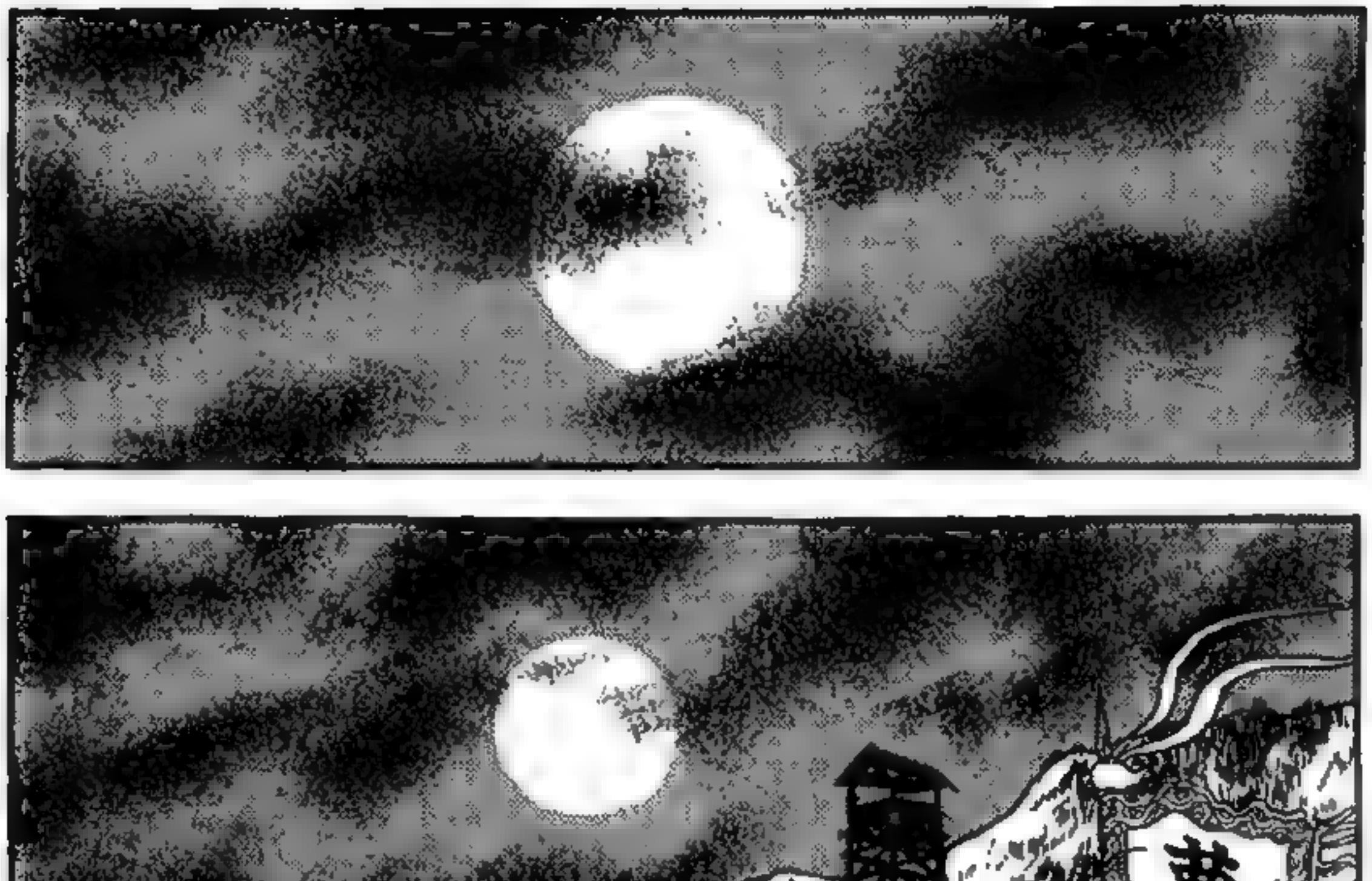

PUT THIS ON YOUR HELMETS.






THIS FEATHER IS HOW WE WILL RECOG-NIZE EACH OTHER DURING THE CHAOS OF BATTLE.


THE HUNDRED WARRIORS WITH GOOSE PLUMES ON THEIR HELMETS, NOW AWAITED NIGHT TO FALL.


曹
曹
曹
曹



YES, SIR.

MAKE SURE TO BE AS QUIET AS POSSIBLE.

GO DISMANTLE A SECTION OF THE STOCKADES.

IT HAS BEEN DONE, SIR.

YES, SIR.

ONCE YOU CHARGE IN, MAKE AS MUCH NOISE AS POSSIBLE AND KILL ANY ENEMY YOU COME across.

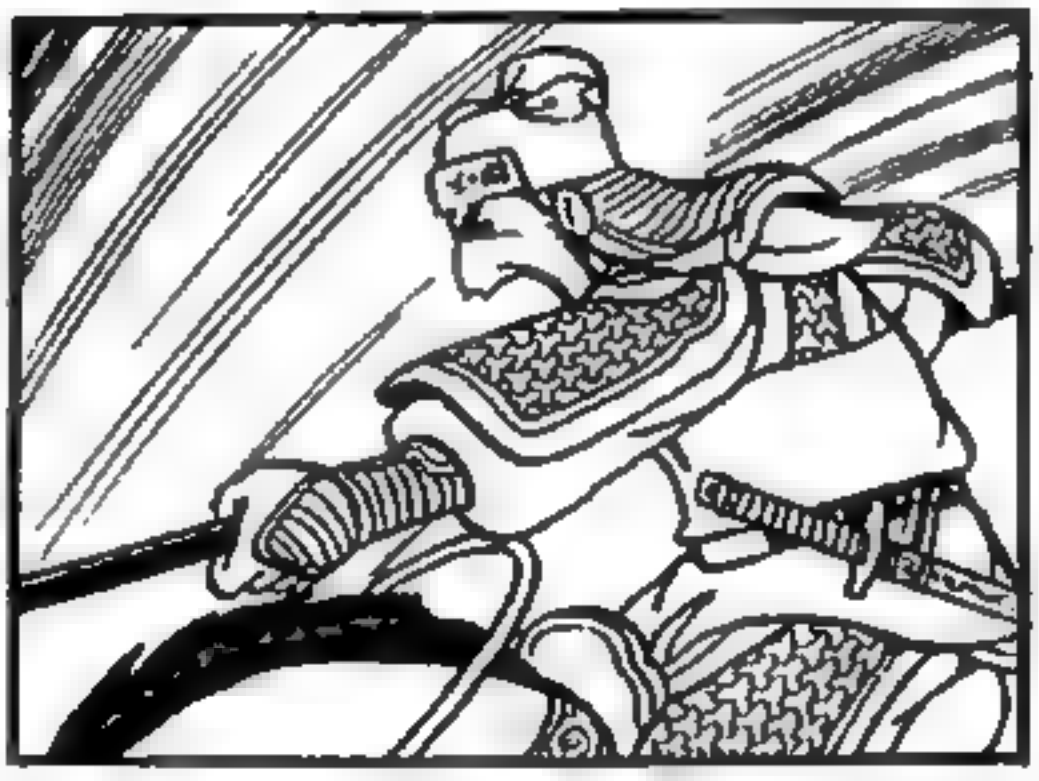
NOW!

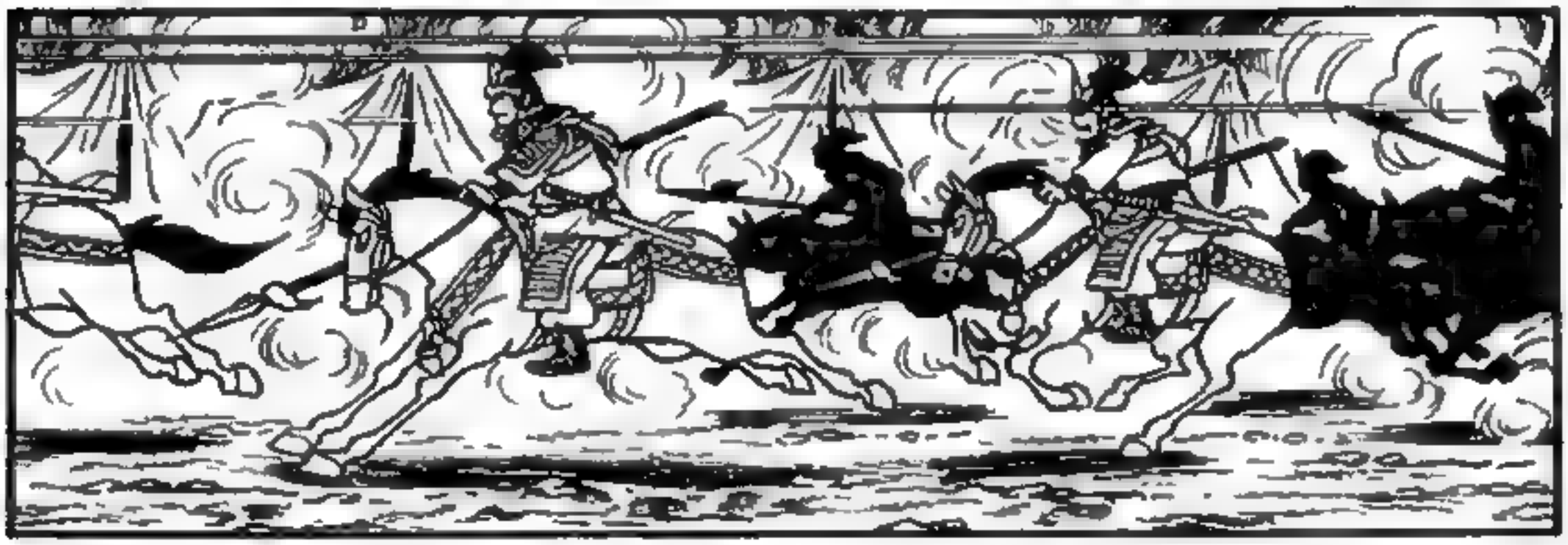

IT'S A RAID!
ENEMY RAID!











THE 400 000 STRONG WEI ARMY WOULD HAVE NEVER IMAGINED THEY'D BE AMBUSHED BY A MERE 100 -HORSEMEN-

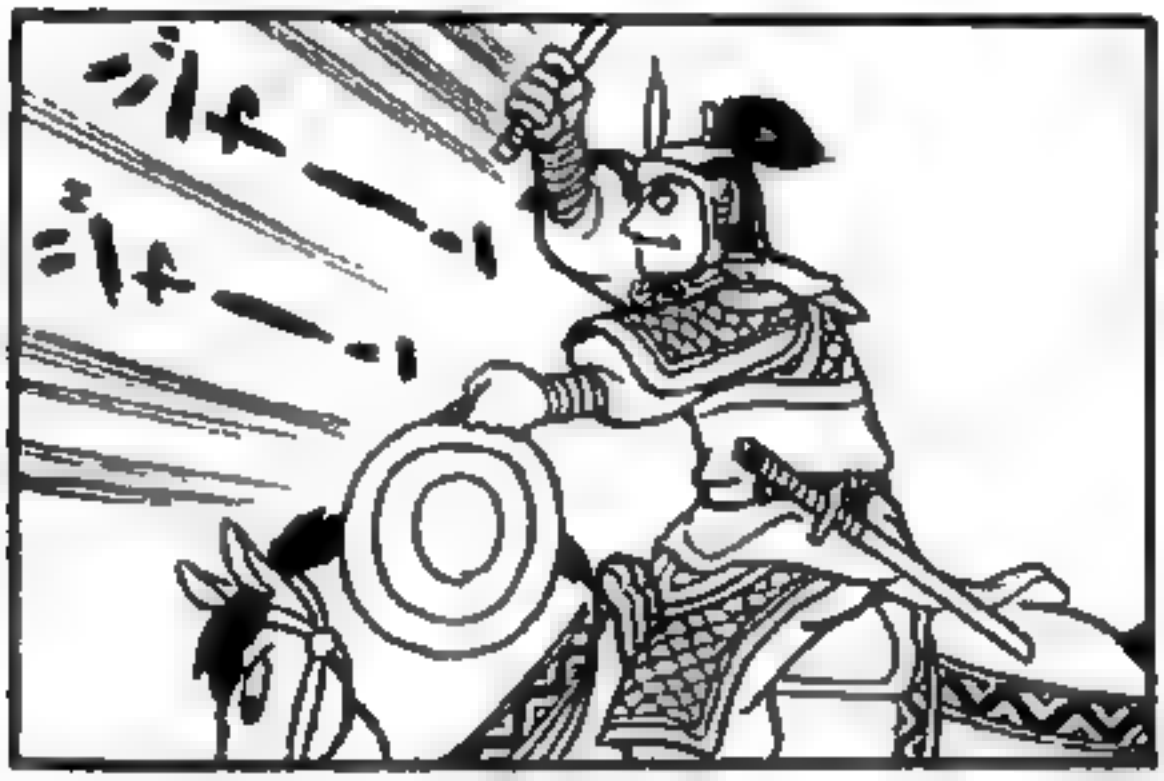
AND STABBED AT THE FIRST SHADOW THEY CAME ACROSS, WHETHER FRIEND OR FOE

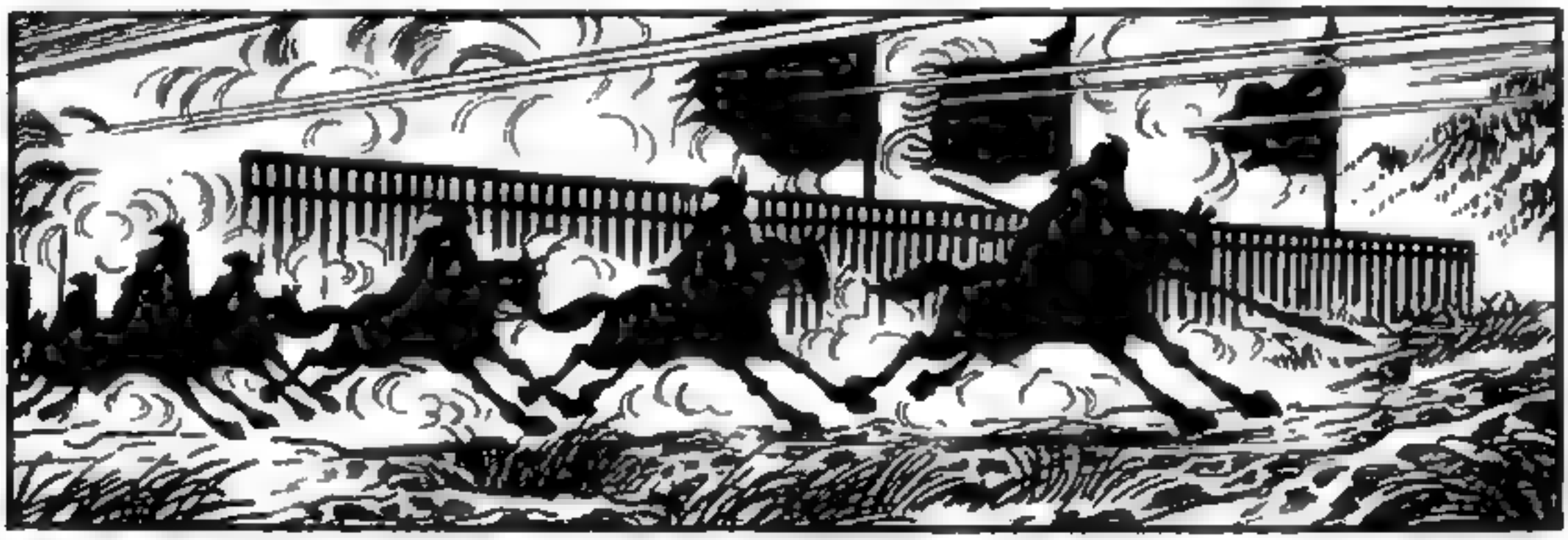
THEY WERE THROWN INTO PANIC AMIDST THE DARKNESS,

IMAGINING A MUCH LARGER THREAT.


SOUND THE RETREAT SIGNAL!


THIS SHOULD DO...






HALT!


DAMMIT! THEY'RE TRYIN' TO GET AWAY!

THOSE CUNNING BASTARDS ...!

NICE TRY BUT WE WON'T FALL FOR IT.

AHH-

THIS IS TEXTBOOK STRATEGY FOR LURING ENEMIES AWAY FROM THEIR BASES! IT'S OBVIOUS THEY'VE GOT TROOPS LYING IN WAIT FOR US OUT THERE!

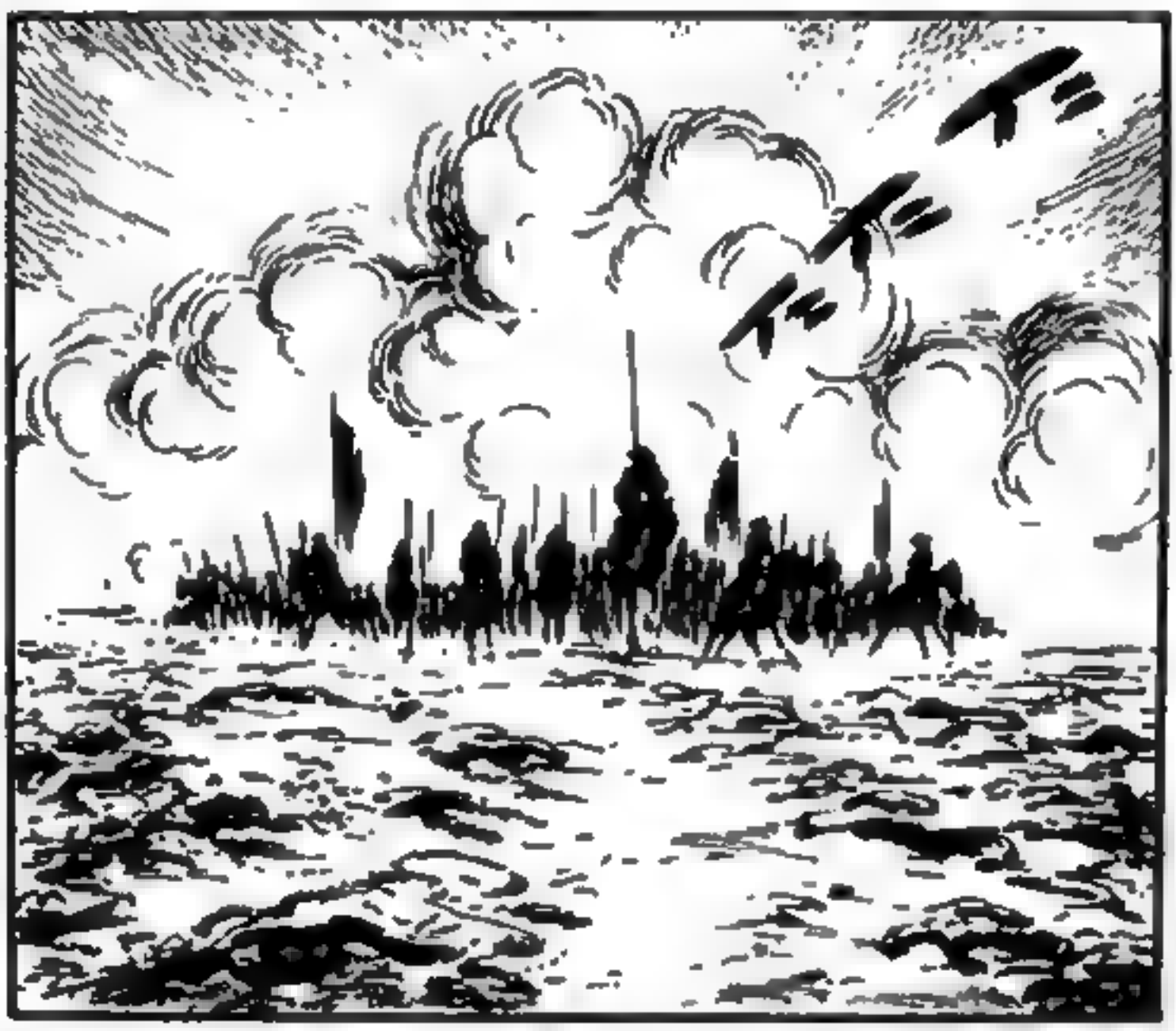
AND SO GAN NING AND HIS HUNDRED HORSEMEN RETURNED TO BASE WITH NOT A SINGLE MAN NOR MOUNT LOST AS PROMISED


SUN QUAN WAS ECSTATIC AT THE SUCCESS.
AND AWARDED EACH MAN WITH ROLLS OF SILK AND CEREMONIAL SWORDS

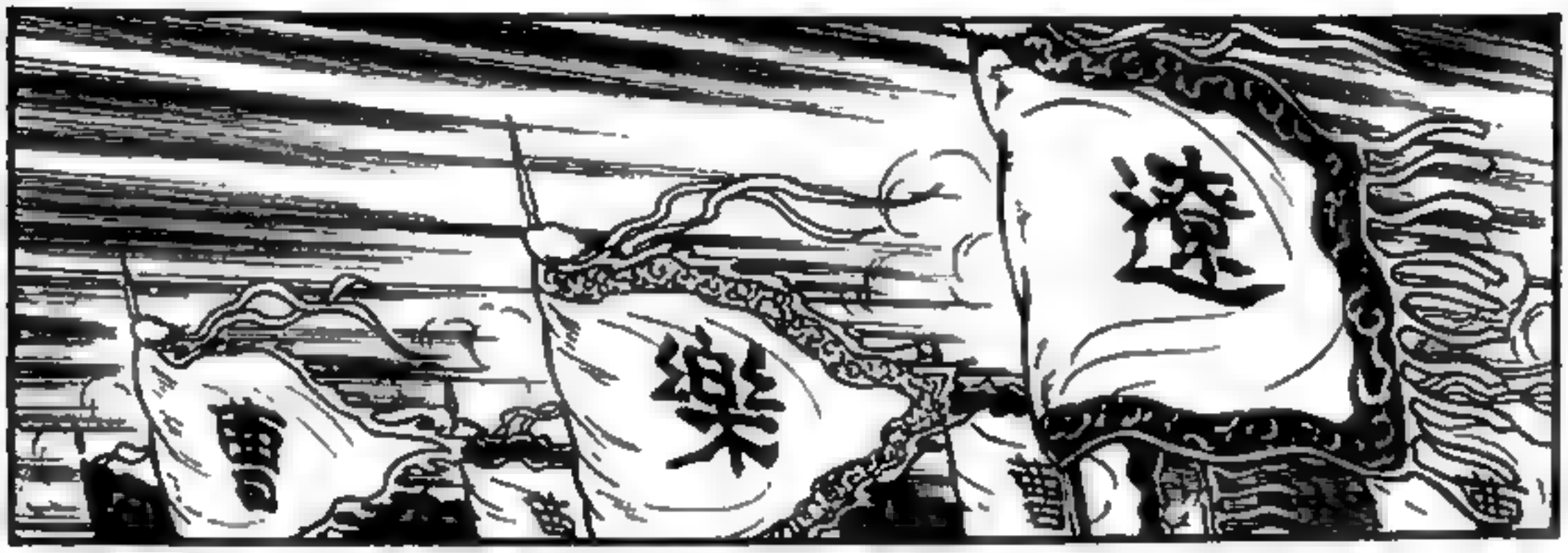

GAN NING WAS AWARDED THE TITLE, "GENERAL WHO OPPRESSES THE ENEMY WITH FEROCITY."
SUN QUAN WOULD LATER CLAIM, "CAO CAO MAY HAVE ZHANG LIAO, BUT I HAVE GAN NING."

ALL-OUT ATTACK

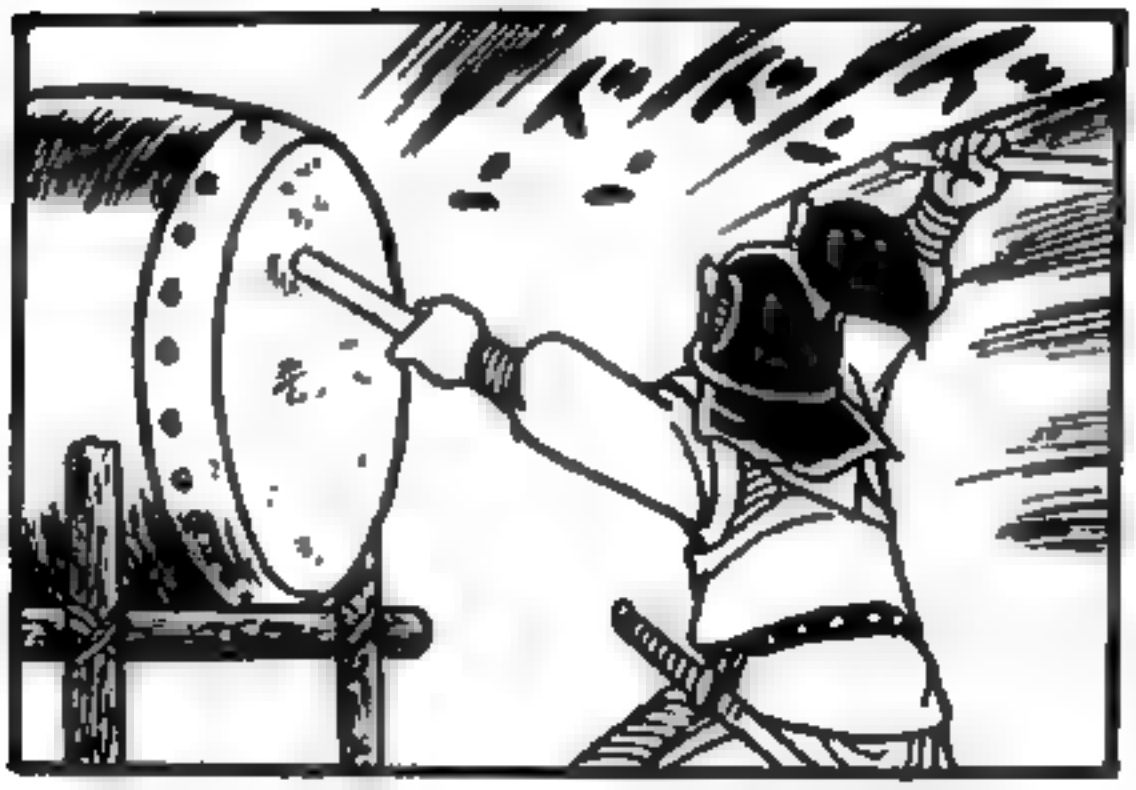








*ZHANG LIAO (遼), YUE (樂) JIN, CAO (曹) CAO




ENEMY ATTACK!

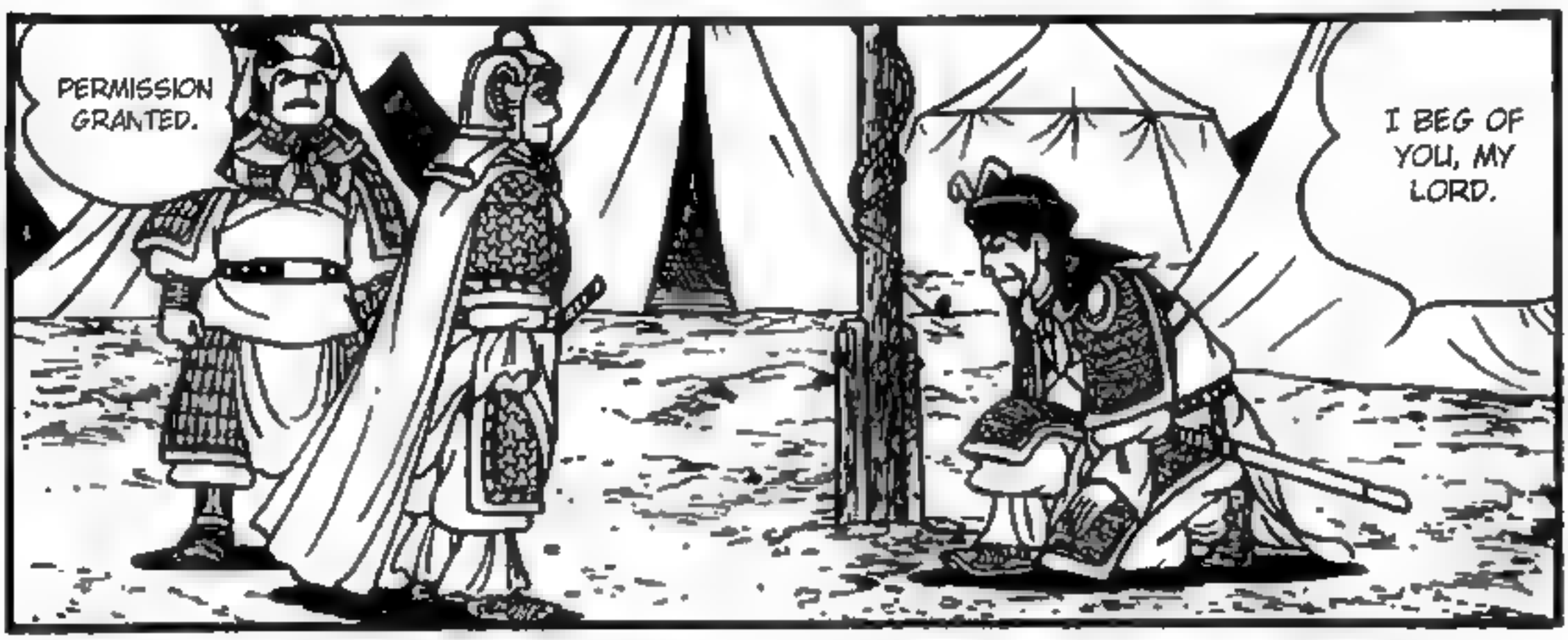



HOW MANY!?




ALLOW ME A CHANCE TO REDEEM MYSELF.


ABOUT ONE DIVISION'S WORTH, LED BY ZHANG LIAO, SIR!


PERMISSION GRANTED.
I BEG OF YOU, MY LORD.




THANK YOU.


FOLLOW ME!





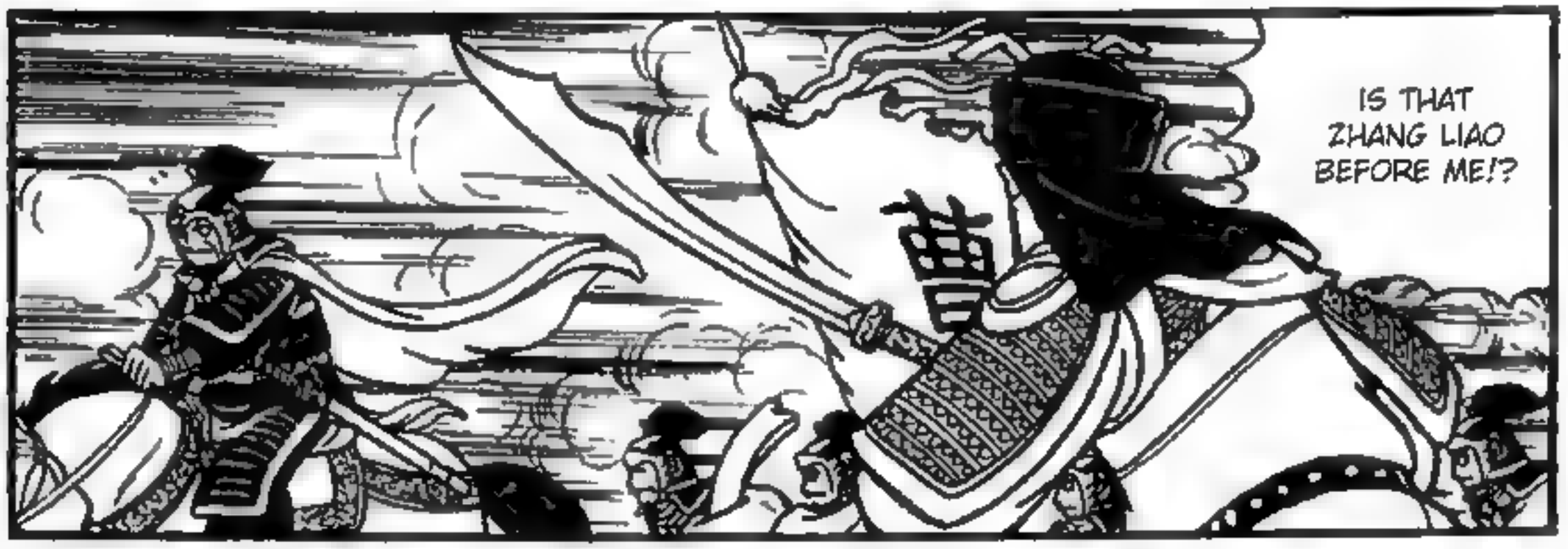

YES, MY LORD.
GAN NING! I FEAR LING TONG MAY BE HASTY IN HIS DESIRE TO PROVE HIS MERITS. FOLLOW AFTER HIM JUST IN CASE.










IS THAT ZHANG LIAO BEFORE ME!?


CURSES, WRONG PERSON!


NO, I AM YUE JIN!



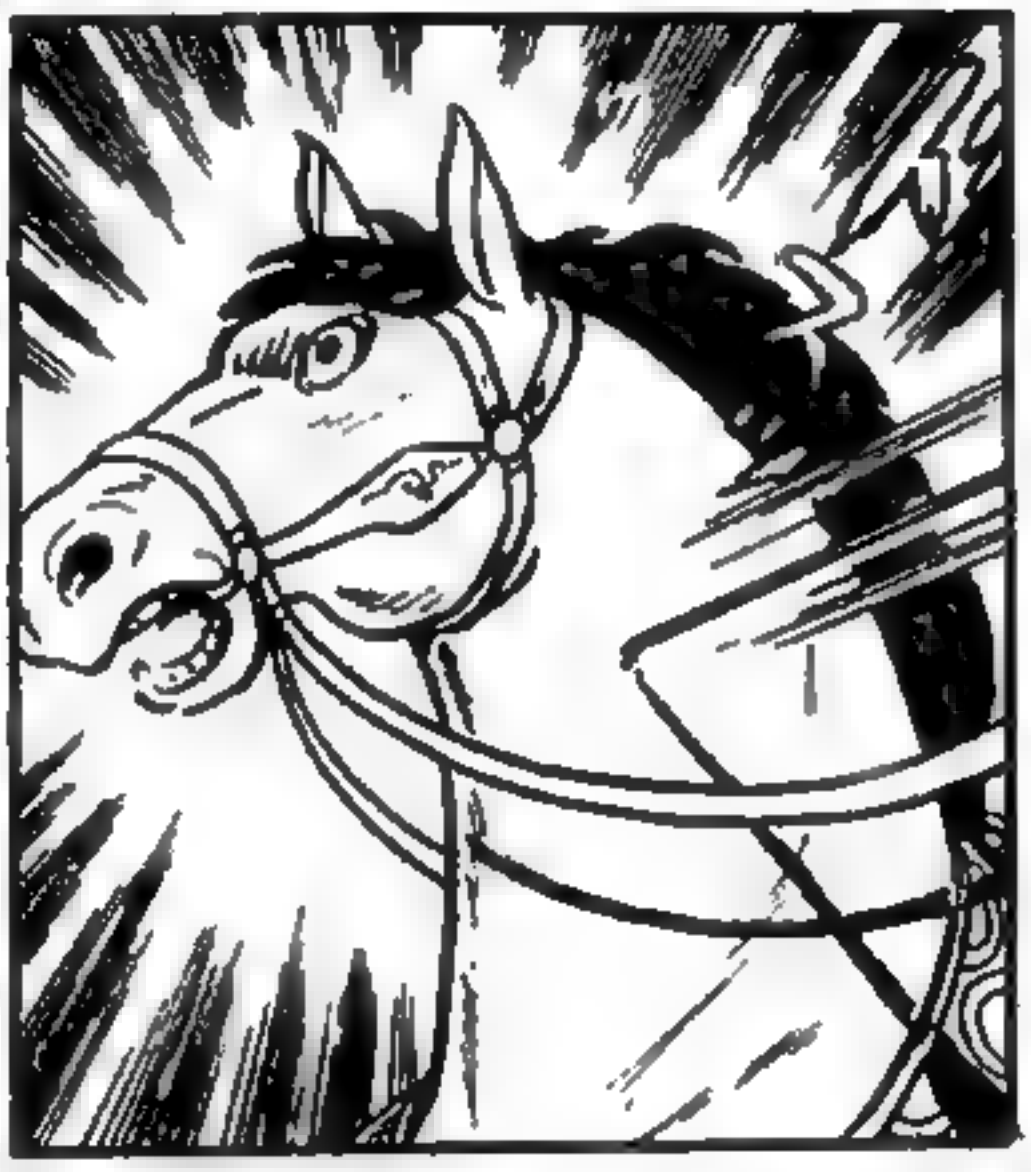

WELL WHATEVER! HAVE AT YOU!

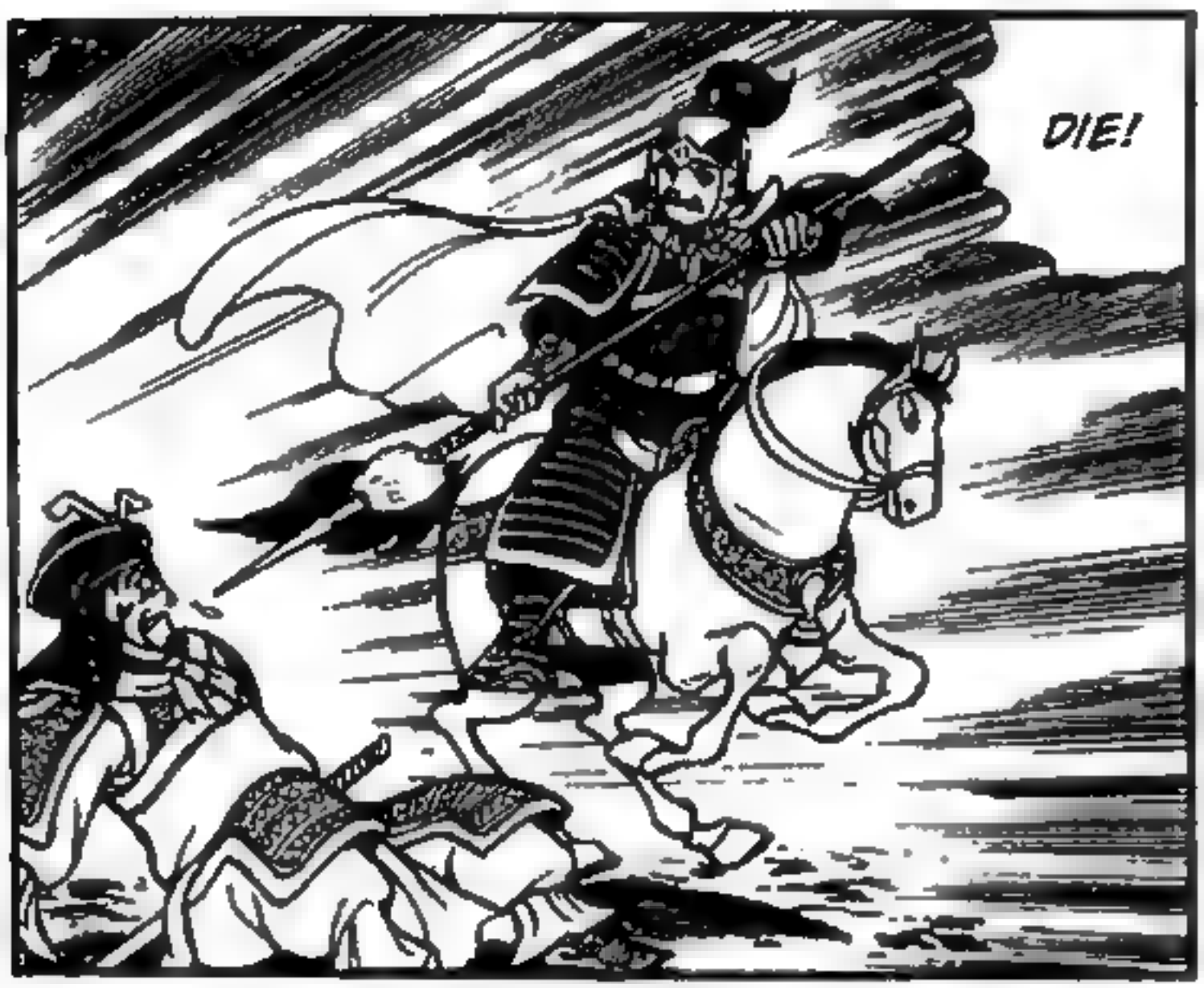











DIE!



AGH!

ビュン

SIR!

GENERAL YUE JIN!

WITH-DRAW!

I... I'M FINE.

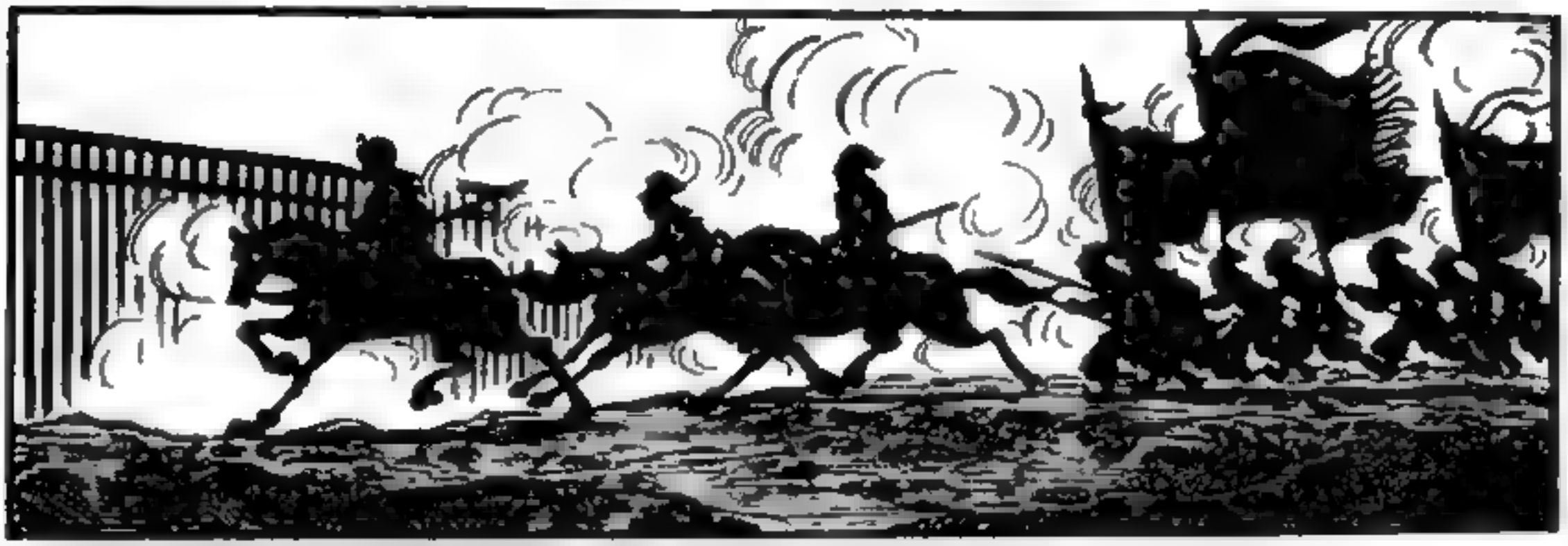
ARE YOU ALRIGHT, YUE JIN!?




CURSES, I'VE LET ANOTHER CHANCE AT GLORY SLIP BY.


I'M FINE.
ARE YOU ALRIGHT, SIR?


RETURN TO BASE!



BOTH WINS AND LOSSES ARE NATURAL ASPECTS OF ANY SOLDIER'S CAREER. YOU NEEDN'T APOLOGIZE.

FORGIVE ME, MY LORD.

YES, SIR.

BUT I HOPE YOU WILL NOT PUT YOURSELF RECKLESSLY IN DANGER FOR WANT OF GLORY IN THE FUTURE.

?

HM?

BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW WHO IT WAS THAT SAVED YOU TODAY?

SO THAT WAS GAN NING'S ARROW...

IT WAS GAN NING WHO SHOT YUE JIN OFF HIS HORSE.

YES, FORGET ANY PAST CONFLICTS AND WORK TOGETHER FOR WU.

I AM IN YOUR DEBT, GAN NING.


THE NEXT DAY...
CAO CAO SPLIT HIS ARMY INTO FIVE FORCES TO ASSAULT WU'S DEFENSIVE LINES AT RUXU. HE WOULD COMMAND THE CENTER.
AND LI DIAN.
WHILE THE LEFT WING WAS LED BY ZHANG LIAO.


AND
PANG DE

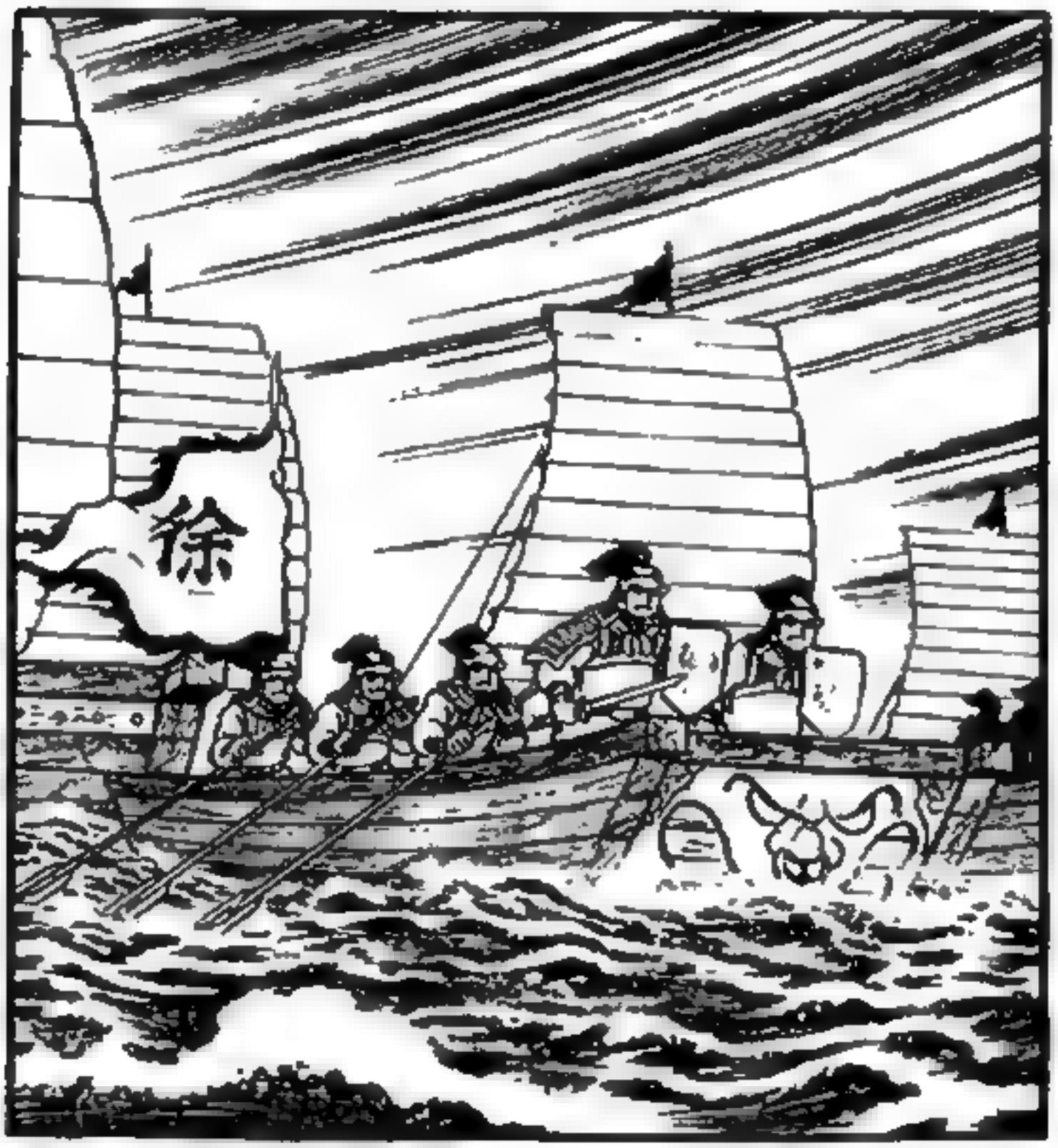

AS FOR THE
RIGHT WING,
IT WAS LED BY
XU HUANG.


SEEING THIS
GREAT
ADVANCE,


XU SHENG AND
DONG XI, IN
CHARGE OF THE
NAVAL DEFENSE
OF RUXU, FELT
UNEASY


DO YOU THINK YOU CAN DEFEND WU WITH SUCH TIMID FACES!?


徐
WHAT'S WITH THE LOOK ON YOUR FACES!?


徐


FOLLOW AFTER ME ON THE SMALLER BOATS! WE SHALL DELAY THE ENEMY ADVANCE!



徐

徐

徐

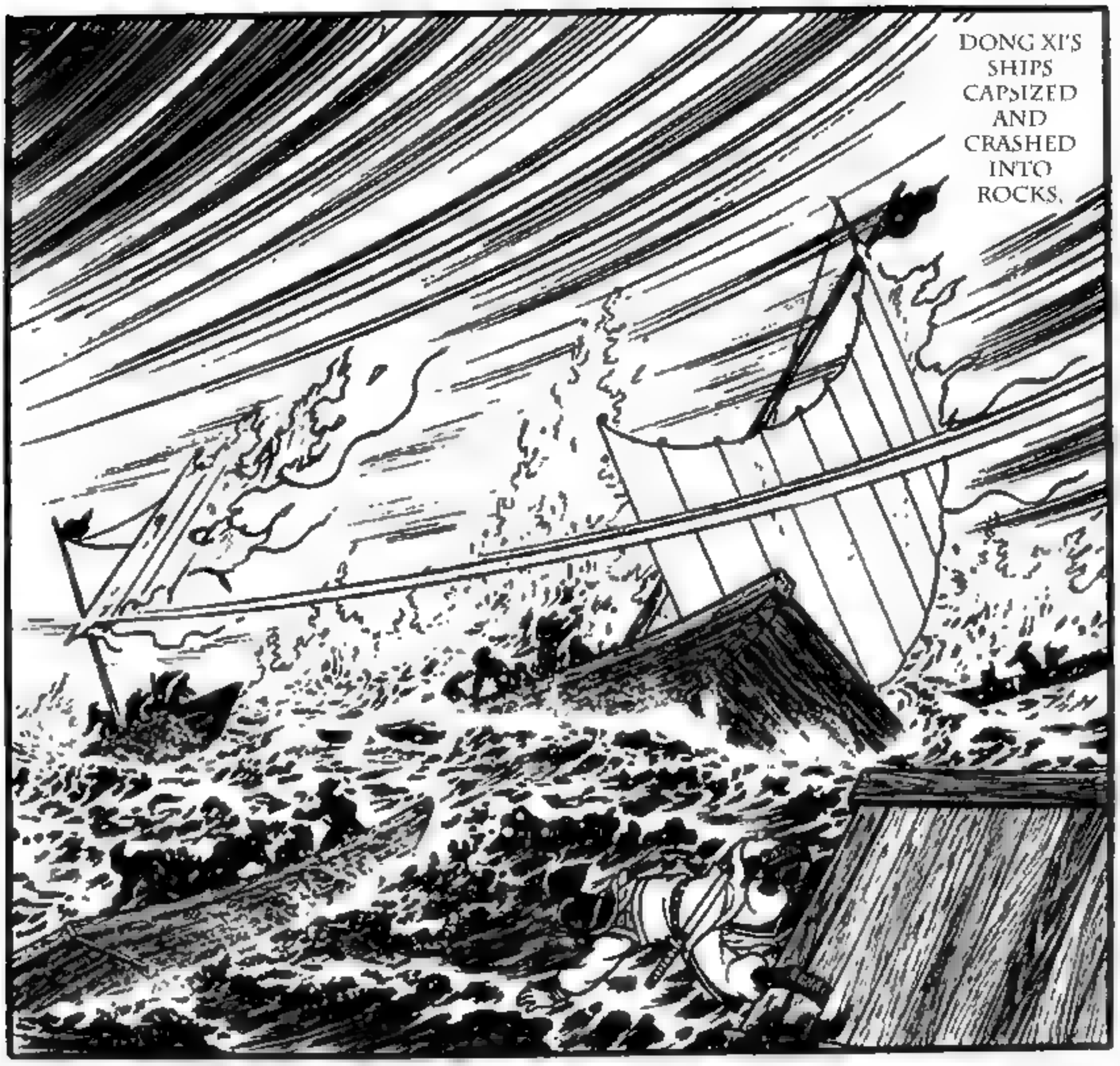

OHH!

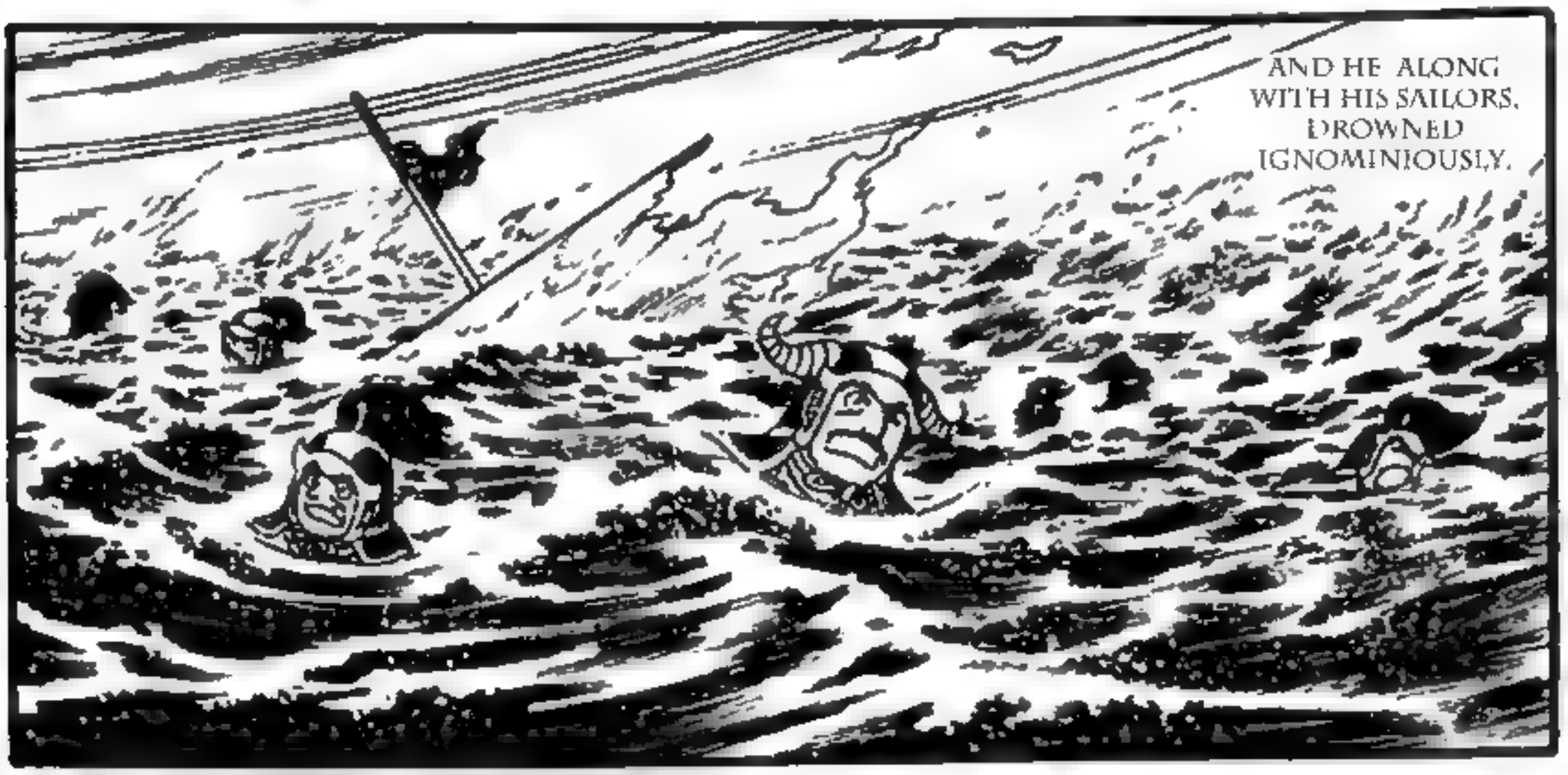

GENERAL DONG XI! XU SHENG'S FORCES HAVE DOCKED AND ARE ATTACKING THE ENEMIES!


董

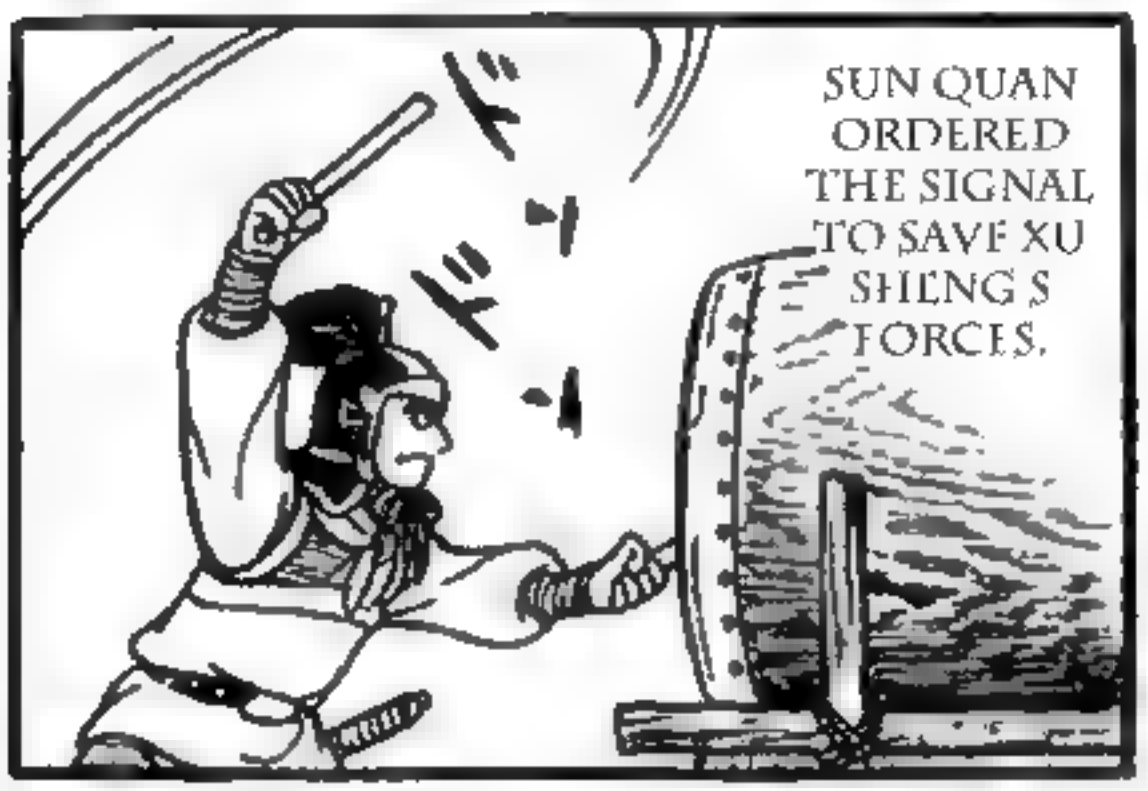

LET US FOLLOW XU SHENG'S LEAD!


BUT FIERCE GALES SUDDENLY APPEARED.


DONG XI'S SHIPS CAPSIZED AND CRASHED INTO ROCKS.

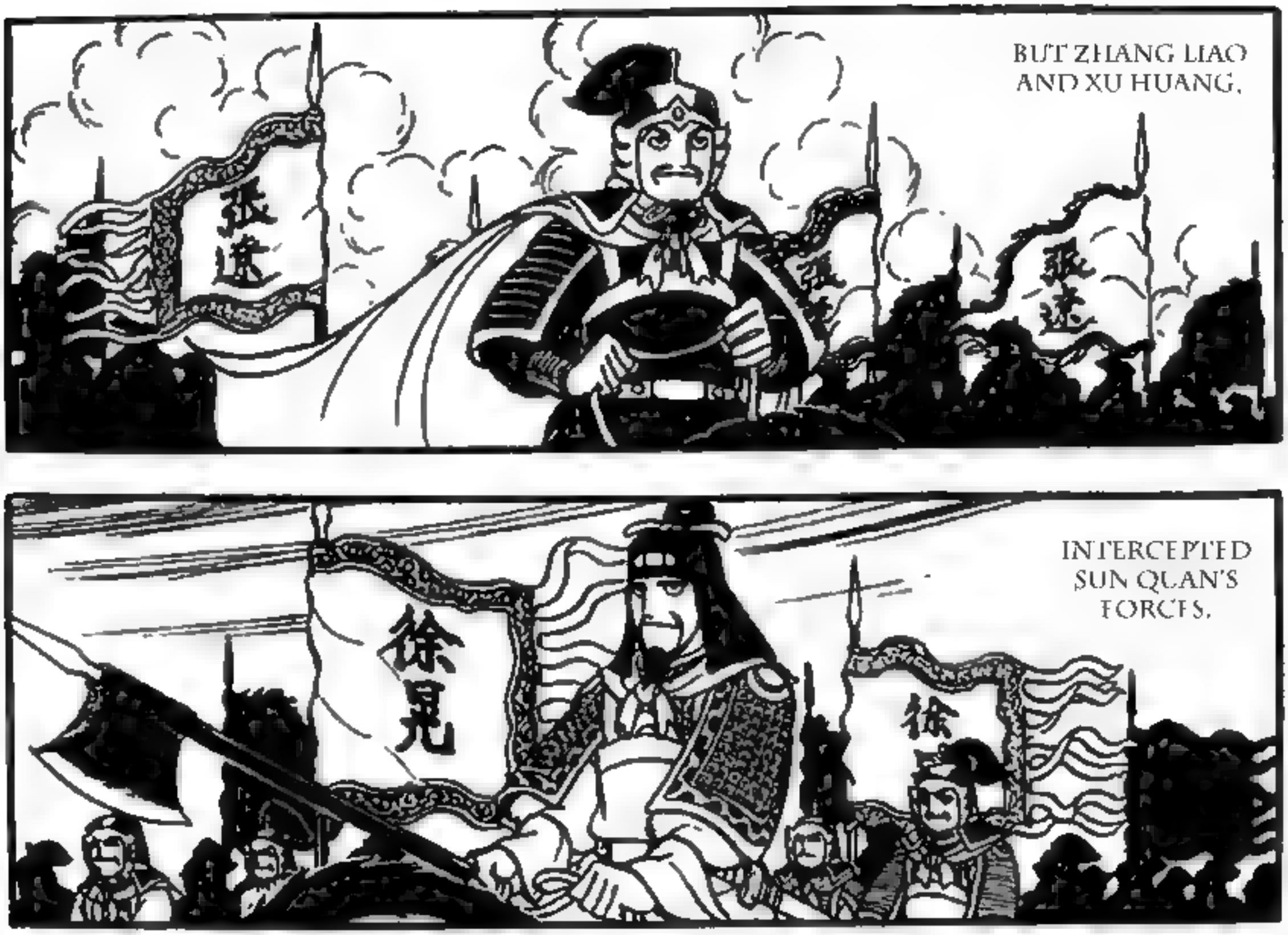

AND HE ALONG WITH HIS SAILORS, DROWNED IGNOMINIOUSLY.

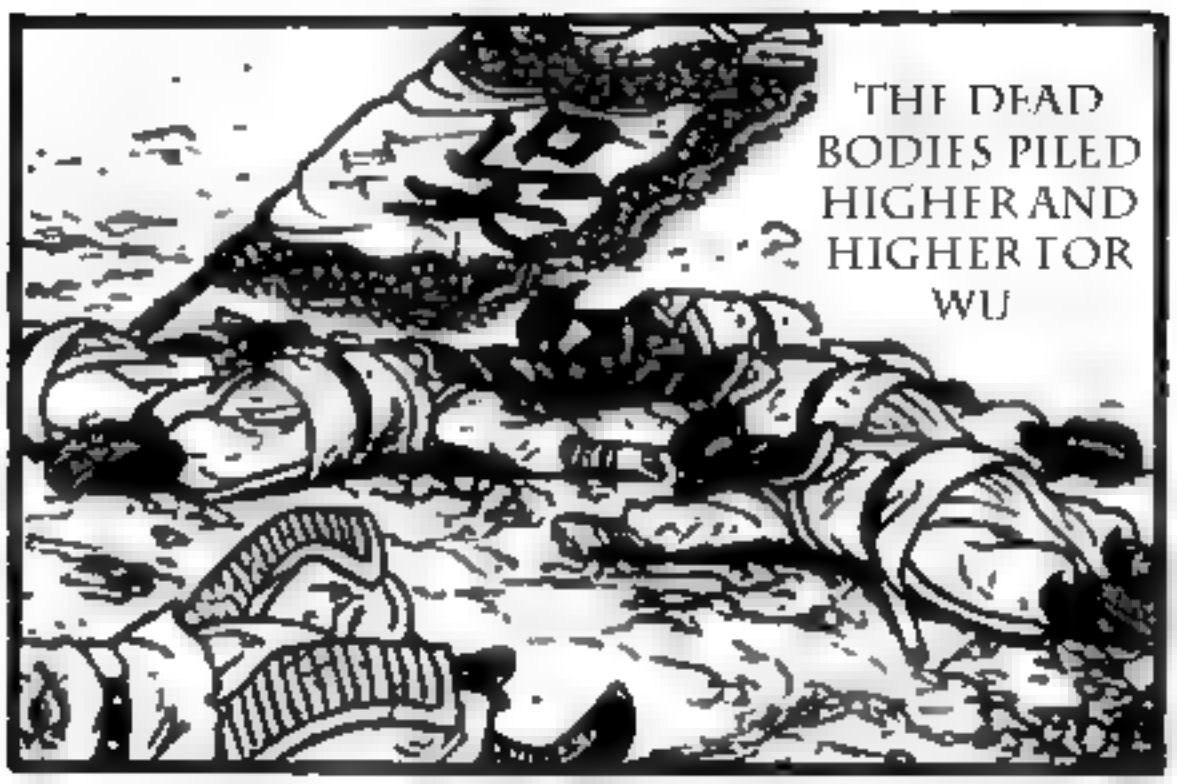

徐
徐
WITH NO SUPPORT FROM DONG XI, XU SHENG FOUND HIMSELF ISOLATED IN CAO CAO'S LINES.
曹
曹

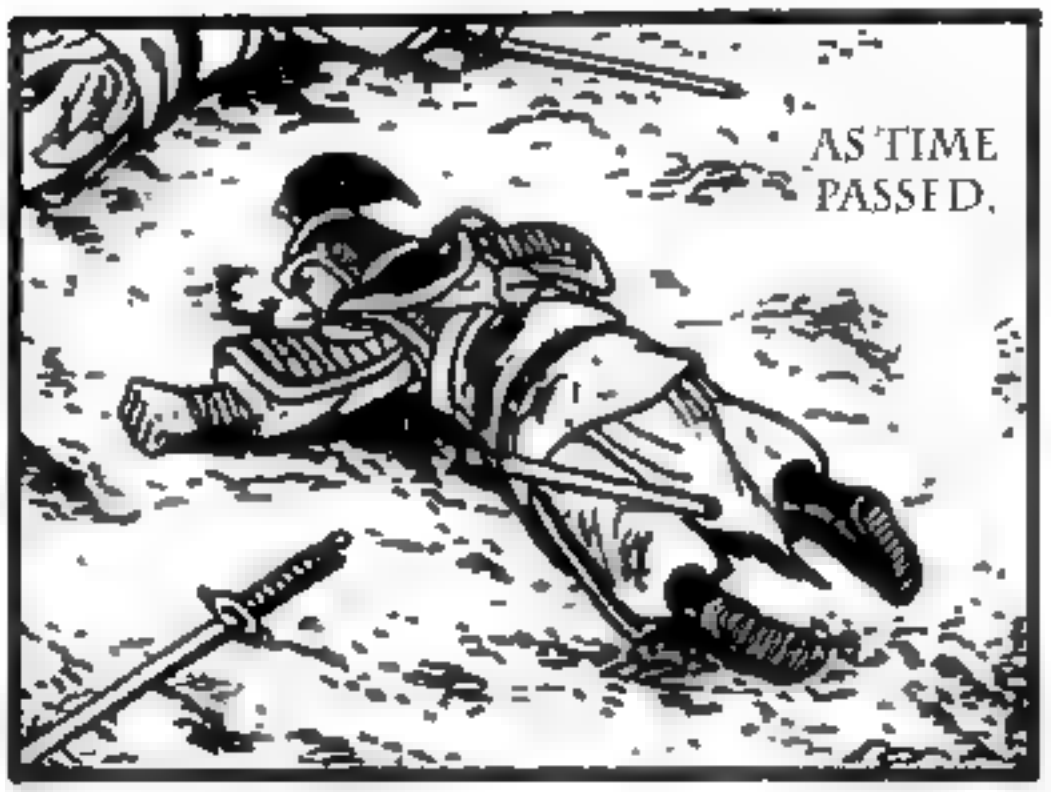

SUN QUAN ORDERED THE SIGNAL TO SAVE XU SHENG'S FORCES.


SEEING THIS,


曹
曹


BUT ZHANG LIAO AND XU HUANG,
張遼
張遼
INTERCEPTED SUN QUAN'S FORCES.
徐晃
徐
A FULL OUT, CHAOTIC CLASH ENSUED


THE DEAD BODIES PILED HIGHER AND HIGHER FOR WU


AS TIME PASSED,


THE LOCATION OF SUN QUAN HIMSELF WAS LOST AMIDST THE CHAOS OF BATTLE


MY LORD!
ZHOU TAI, IS THAT YOU!?


MY LORD! WHERE ARE YOU, MY LORD!?

YES.

THIS PLACE IS FAR TOO DANGEROUS FOR MY LORD. PLEASE RETREAT TO THE SHIPS!

AH! THERE HE IS!

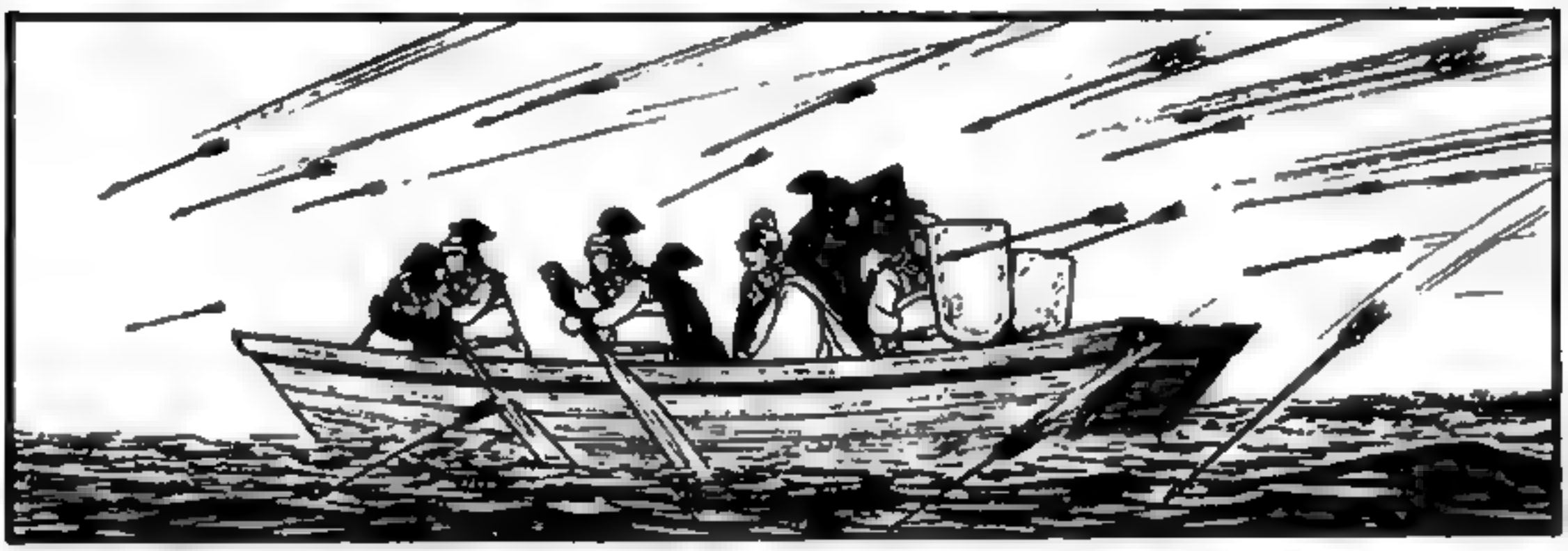
CLEAR THE WAY!

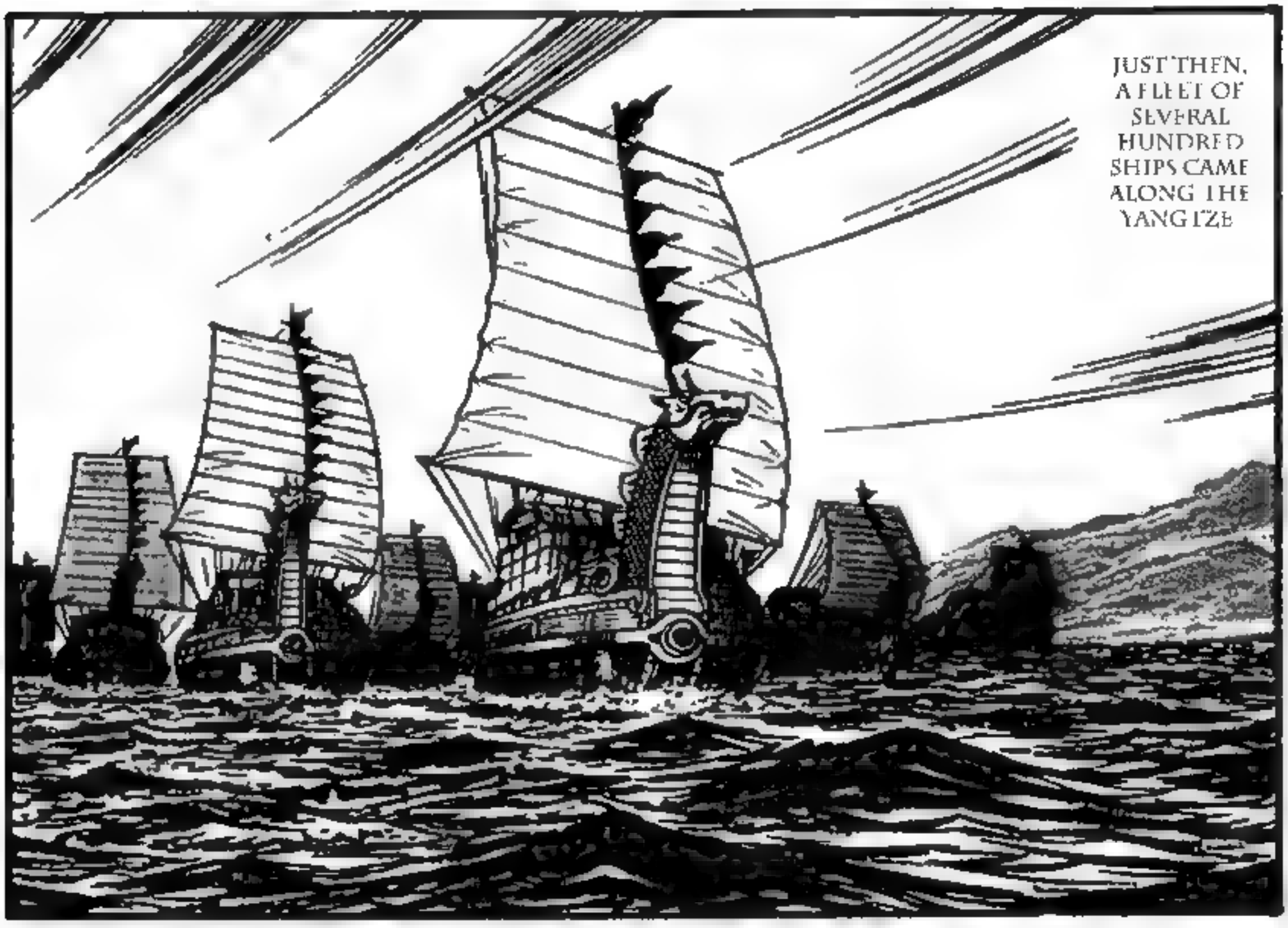
DON'T LET SUN QUAN GO!


COME ABOARD QUICKLY, MY LORD!
LU MENG! ESCORT OUR LORD BACK TO THE SHIPS!

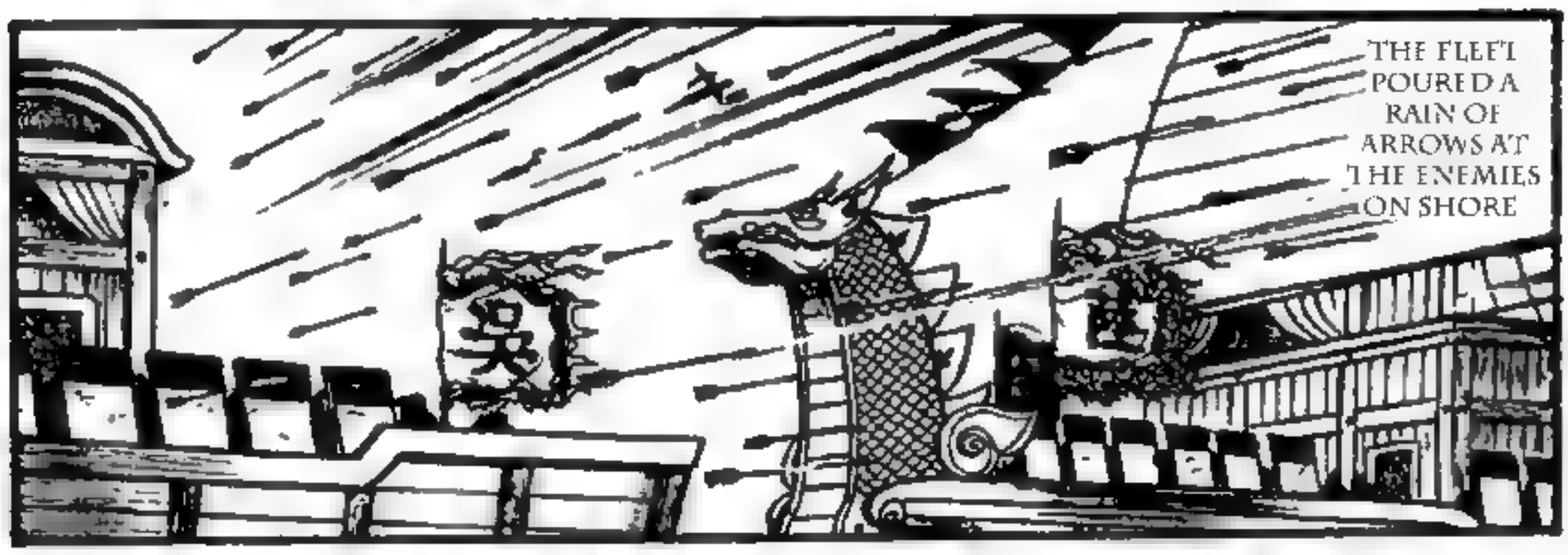



DON'T LET THEM ESCAPE! NOW'S OUR BEST CHANCE!




JUST THEN, A FLEET OF SEVERAL HUNDRED SHIPS CAME ALONG THE YANGTZE


THEY WERE LED BY LU XUN, WHO HAD 10,000 TROOPS ONBOARD
陸

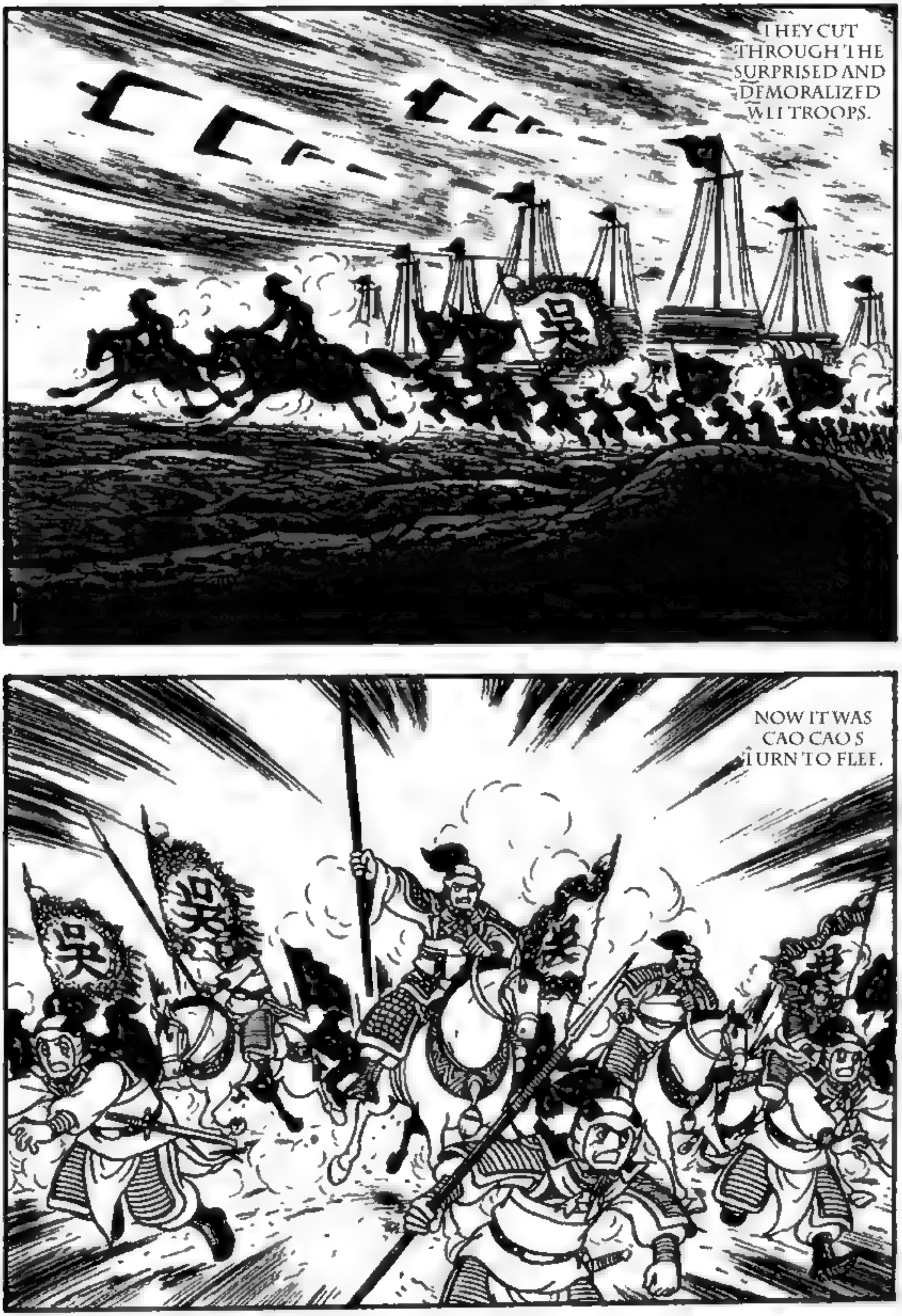

THE FLEET POURED A RAIN OF ARROWS AT THE ENEMIES ON SHORE
吳








THAT'S ENOUGH! PREPARE TO LAND!

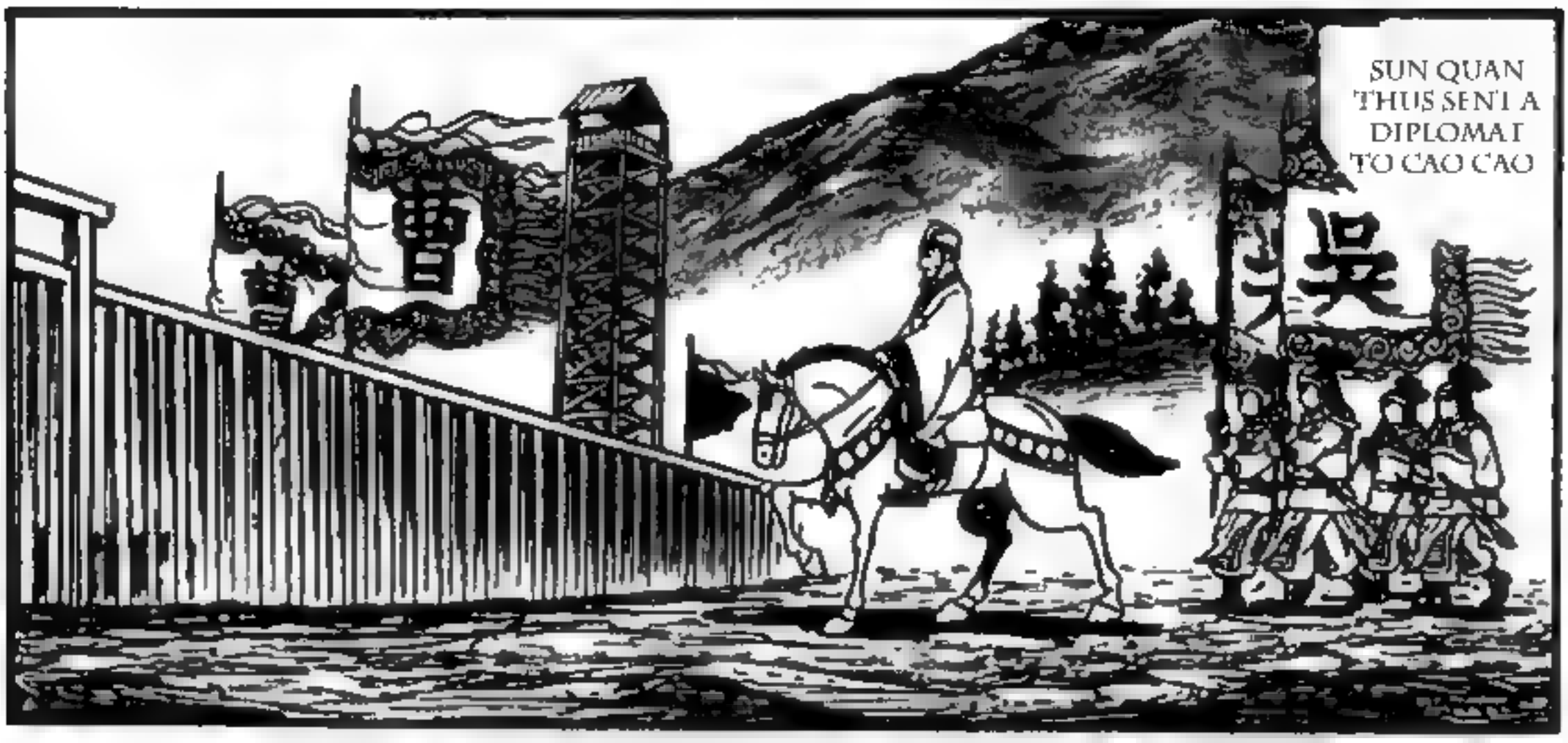

THEY CUT THROUGH THE SURPRISED AND DEMORALIZED WEI TROOPS.
NOW IT WAS CAO CAO'S TURN TO FLEE.


WITH CAO CAO FORCED TO WITHDRAW, THE BATTLE DREW TO A CLOSE.

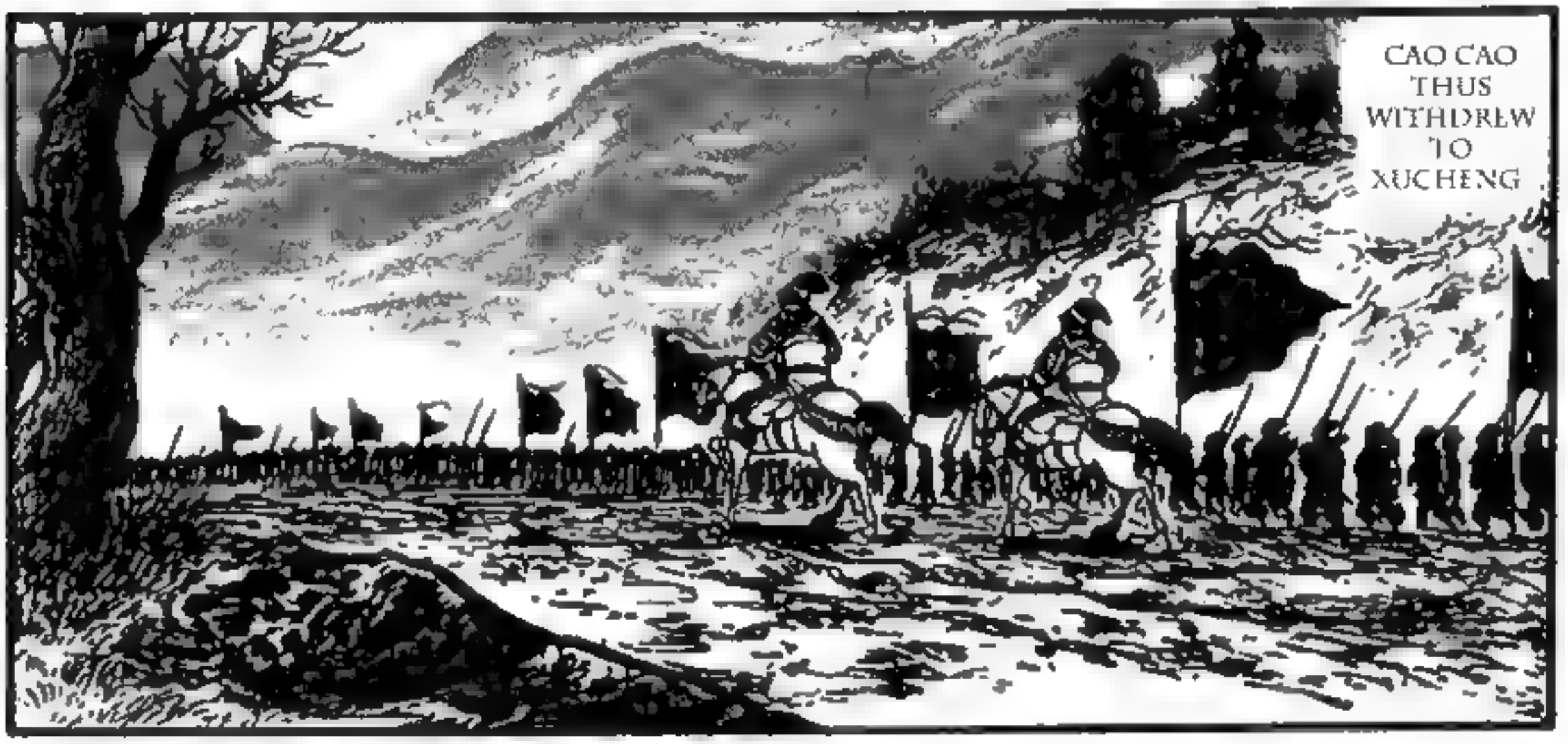

AND DONG XI

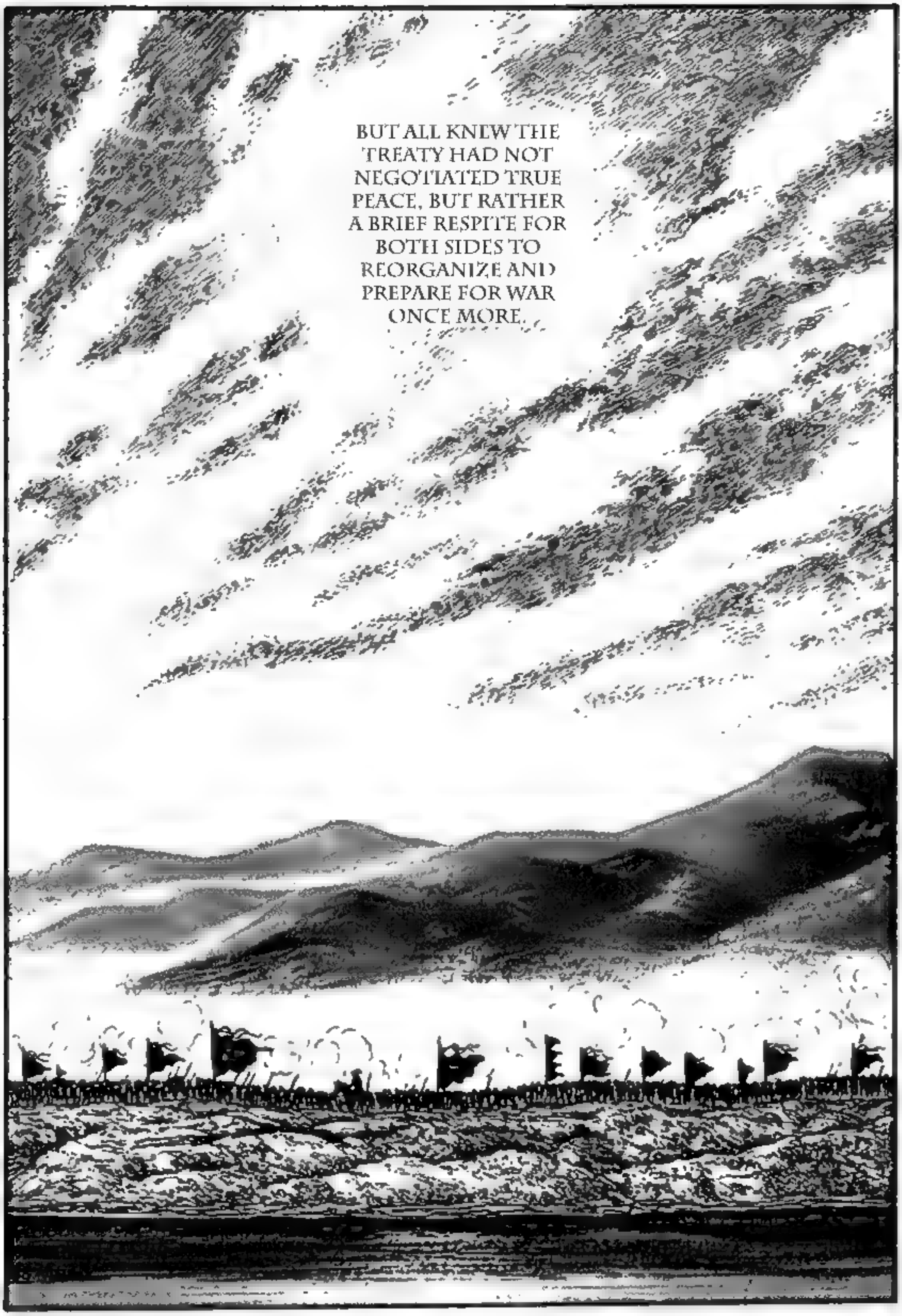

BOTH SIDES SUFFERED ENORMOUS CASUALTIES WU HAD LOST GENERALS CHEN WU,


BOTH SIDES WERE TOO DRAINED TO ATTEMPT ANOTHER ENGAGEMENT

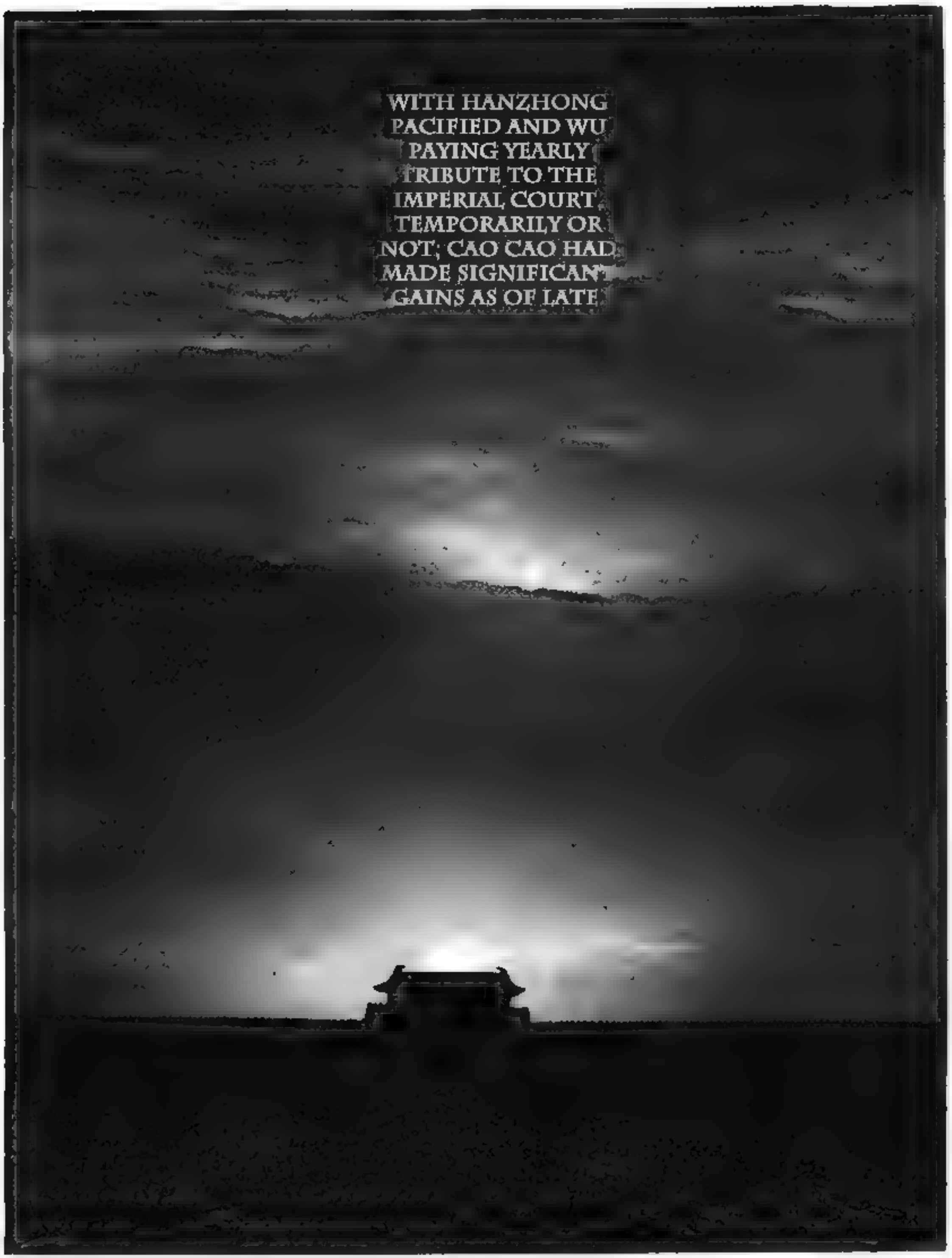

SUN QUAN
THUS SENT A
DIPLOMAT
TO CAO CAO

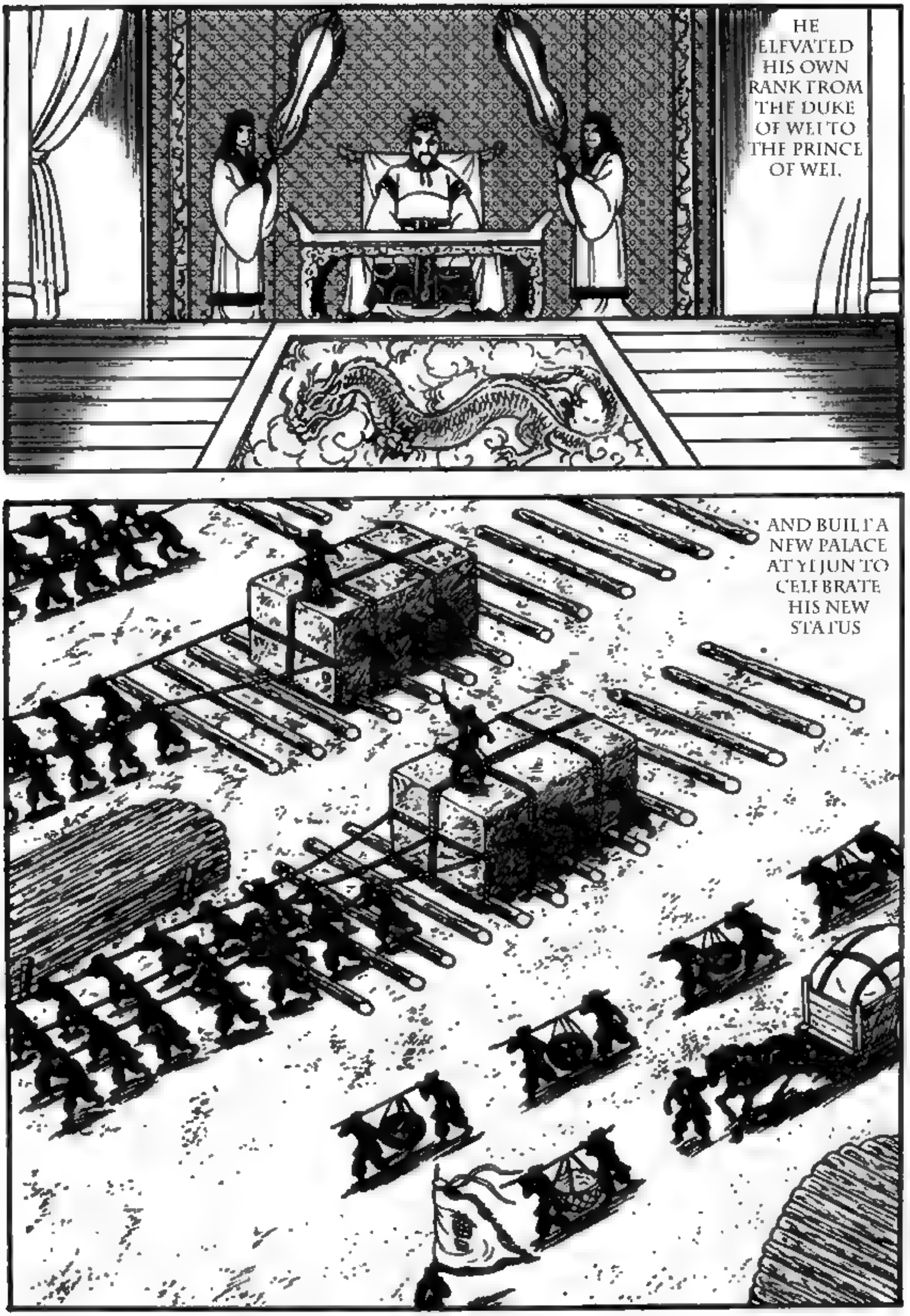

A PEACE TREATY
WAS SETTLED
UNEXPECTEDLY
QUICKLY, ON THE
PROMISE THAT WU
WOULD SEND
YEARLY TRIBUTE
TO THE IMPERIAL
HAN COURT

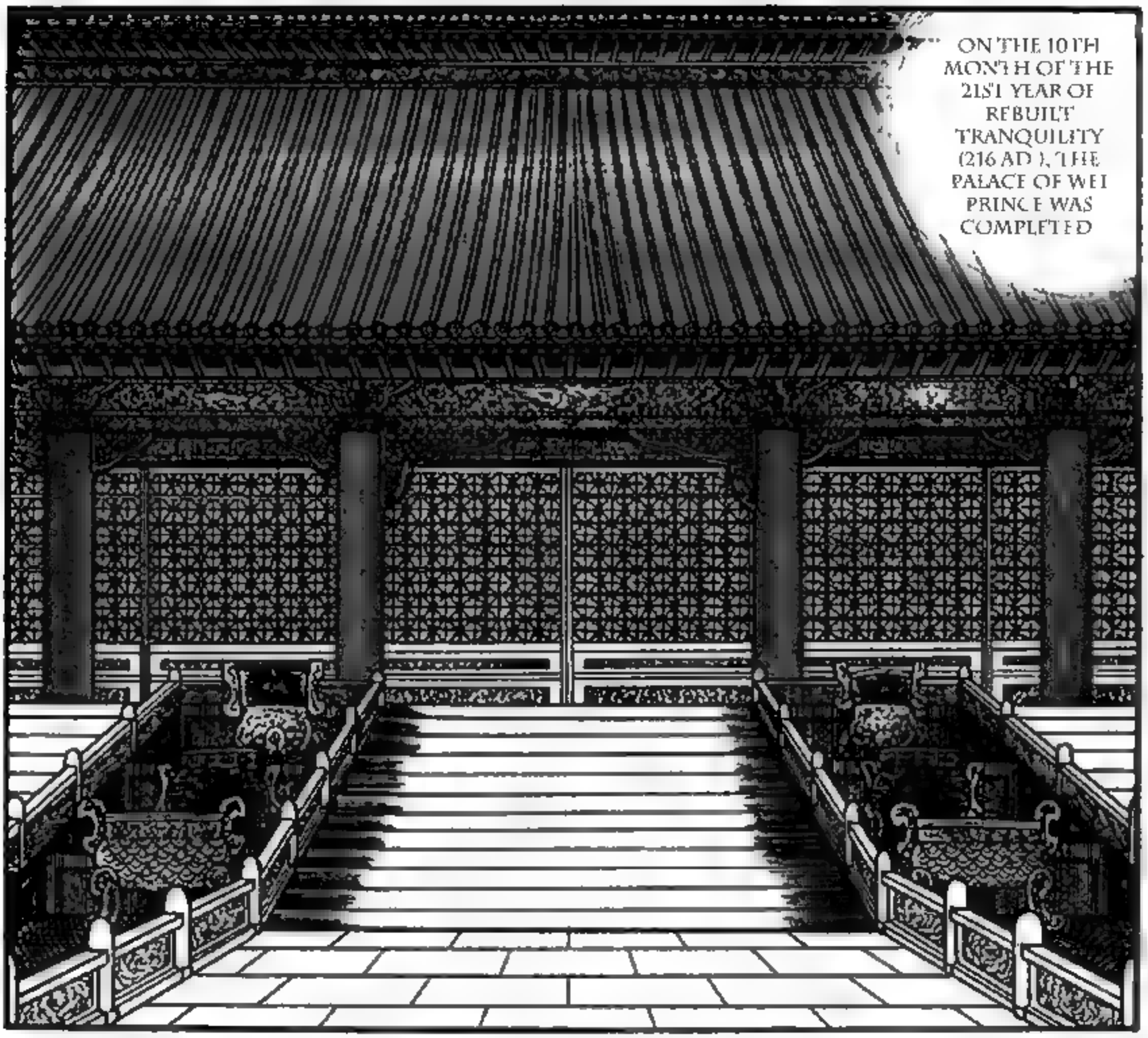

CAO CAO
THUS
WITHDREW
TO
XUCHENG

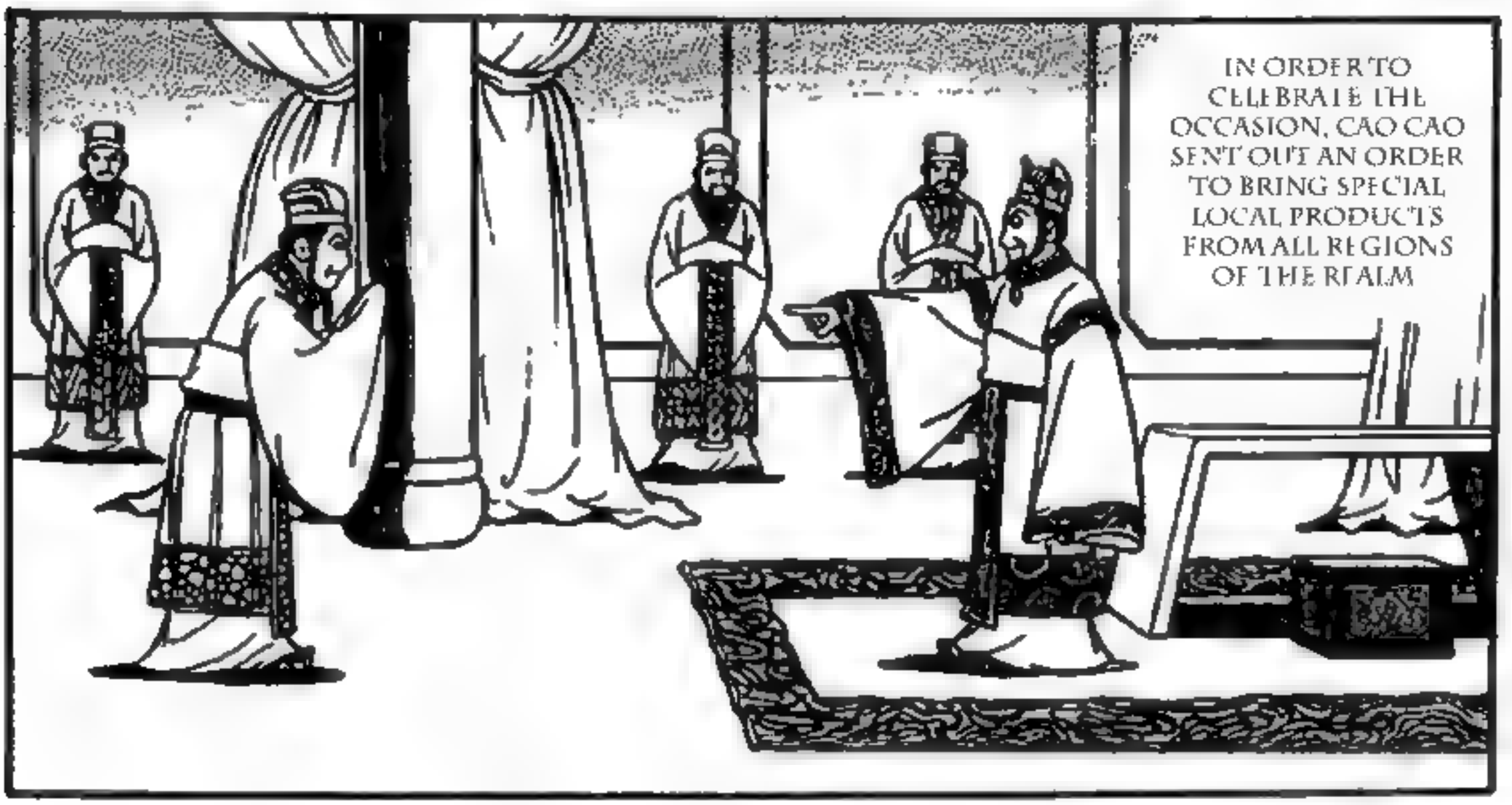

BUT ALL KNEW THE
TREATY HAD NOT
NEGOTIATED TRUE
PEACE, BUT RATHER
A BRIEF RESPITE FOR
BOTH SIDES TO
REORGANIZE AND
PREPARE FOR WAR
ONCE MORE.

AN ECCENTRIC OLD MAN




HE ELEVATED HIS OWN RANK FROM THE DUKE OF WEI TO THE PRINCE OF WEI.
AND BUILT A NEW PALACE AT YI JUN TO CELEBRATE HIS NEW STATUS


ON THE 10TH MONTH OF THE 21ST YEAR OF REBUILT TRANQUILITY (216 AD), THE PALACE OF WEI PRINCE WAS COMPLETED


IN ORDER TO CELEBRATE THE OCCASION, CAO CAO SENT OUT AN ORDER TO BRING SPECIAL LOCAL PRODUCTS FROM ALL REGIONS OF THE REALM

SINCE SUN QUAN AND CAO CAO WERE AT PEACE FOR THE TIME BEING, SUN QUAN AGREED TO SEND 40 BASKETS OF THE MUCH SOUGHT OUT WENZHOU ORANGES.

HALT. WE WILL TAKE A SHORT BREAK HERE.

A BANQUET WITH ONLY THE MOST LUXURIOUS AND EXOTIC FOODS FROM ALL LANDS UNDER HEAVEN? HA, THAT CAO CAO'S GOT SOME EGO, I TELL YOU WHAT.

YOU BET. WE'RE CARRYING SOME VALUABLE LOCAL-PRODUCE.

MY, MY, DON'T YOU STRAPPING YOUNG MEN LOOK QUITE TIRED.

OH? THEN MAYBE I SHOULD LEND YOU ALL A HAND?

WE'VE STILL GOT OVER A THOUSAND LI TO GO, TOO... IT'LL BE TIRING, ALRIGHT.

WHAT, THIS LITTLE THING? NO SWEAT AT ALL!

YOU OKAY THERE, OLD MAN? THAT'S PRETTY HEAVY, YOU KNOW.

UP WE GO!

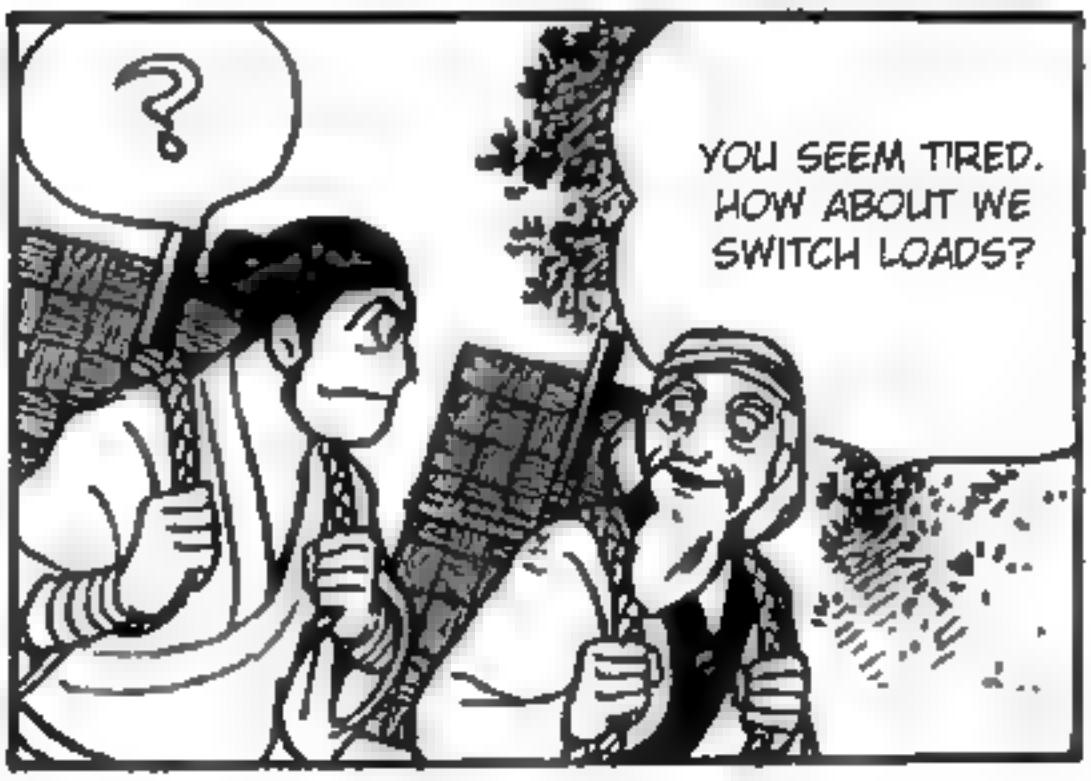
HA, THAT'S ONE SPIRITED GRAMPS.

IF YOU GET TIRED, WE CAN SWITCH.

BREAK'S OVER!




NO, NO. MINE'S QUITE LIGHT, I TELL YOU.
I DON'T THINK THERE'LL BE ANY DIFFER-ENCE.

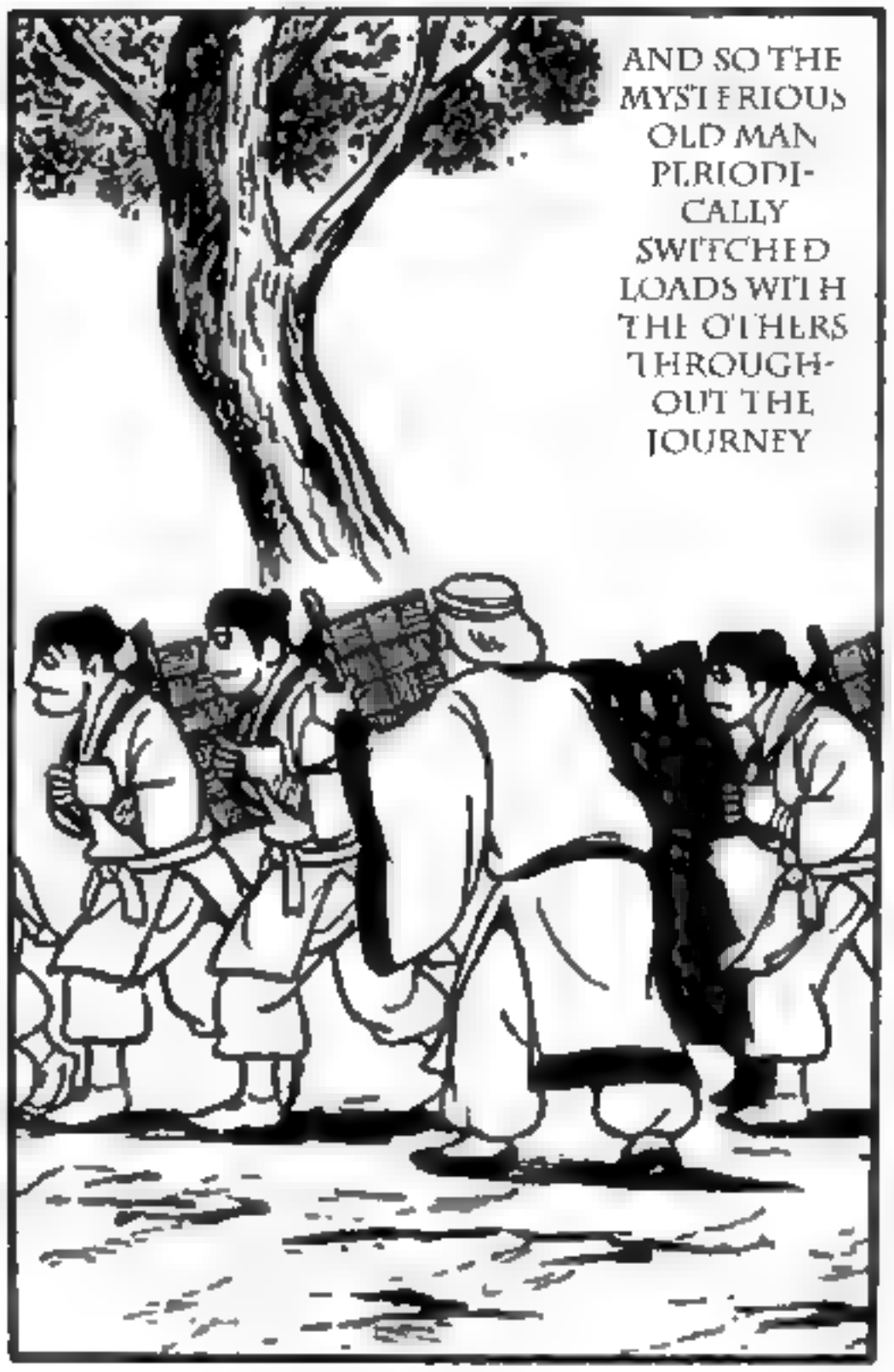

?
YOU SEEM TIRED. HOW ABOUT WE SWITCH LOADS?


HEE HEE
WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED. IT IS LIGHT!

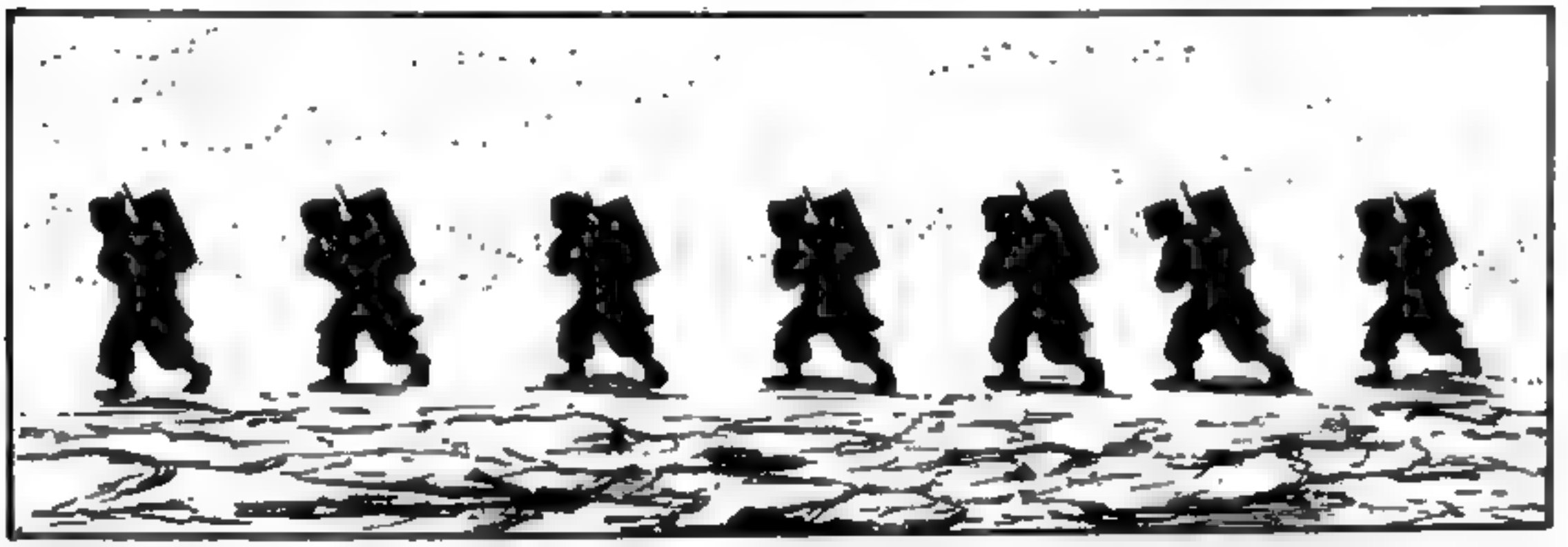

HUH.
WELL?


WHAT THE...?


YOU SEEM LIKE YOU'RE HAVING A HARD TIME TOO. LET'S SWITCH.


AND SO THE MYSTERIOUS OLD MAN PERIODI-CALLY SWITCHED LOADS WITH THE OTHERS THROUGH-OUT THE JOURNEY


HA, I CAN WALK THOUSANDS OF LI JUST FINE WITH THIS!

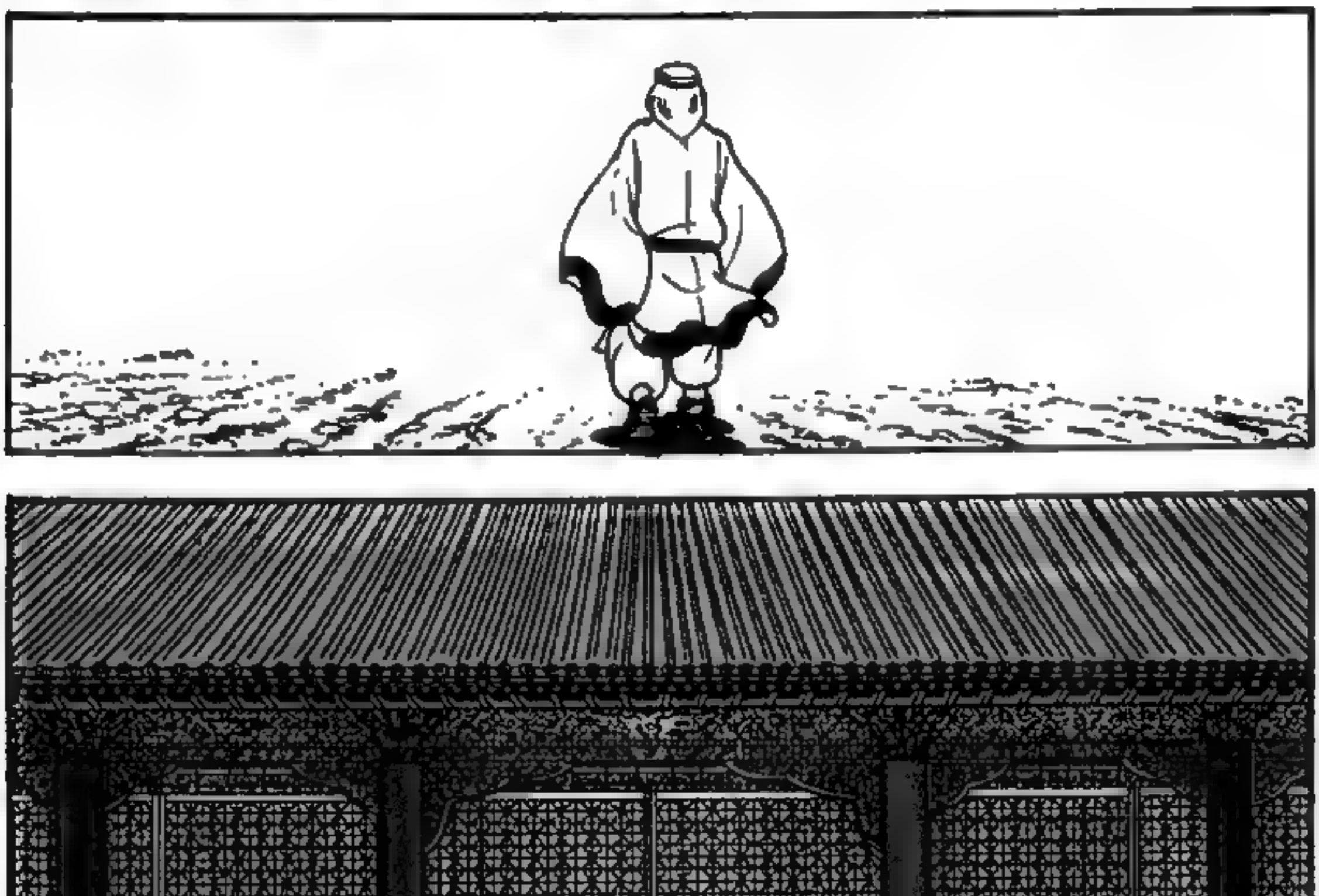



AT LAST, THEY REACHED THE PRINCE OF WEI'S PALACE.


MY NAME IS ZUO CI, COURTESY NAME, YUANFANG. I'M FROM THE SAME VILLAGE AS THE PRINCE OF WEI. WHEN YOU MEET THE PRINCE, MENTION ME TO HIM. HE MAY REMEMBER ME.
GEE, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YA! WHAT'S EVEN YOUR NAME, OLD MAN?


BYE! THANKS FOR ALL THE HELP!


FAREWELL THEN.




BRING A FEW OVER. THOSE ORANGES ARE QUITE DELECTABLE.


AH, SO THE WENZHOU ORANGES HAVE ARRIVED?


YES, SIR.




AH YES, THE ORANGES OF WENZHOU ARE UNLIKE ANY O-


I HAVE BROUGHT THE ORANGES, SIR.

HM?

IT'S EMPTY...

THESE ORANGES ARE NOTHING BUT PEELS!

THIS ONE TOO! AND THIS AS WELL!

YES, SIR.

BRING THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DELIVERY OF THESE ORANGES!

I... I... I'M UTTERLY BAFFLED, CHANCELLOR.

HOW DO YOU ACCOUNT FOR THE FACT THAT NONE OF THESE ORANGES HAVE ANY ACTUAL FRUIT INSIDE!?

BUT PEEL THEM, AND YOU FIND NOTHING INSIDE!

YES, I TOO... THEY LOOK PERFECTLY NORMAL FROM THE OUTSIDE,

N-NO, NOT AT ALL!

DID ANYTHING UNUSUAL HAPPEN DURING THE DELIVERY?

AN OLD MAN?

THE ONLY THING I CAN THINK OF IS AN OLD MAN QUITE ROBUST FOR HIS AGE HELPING THE WORKMEN CARRY THE ORANGES HERE.

FROM THE SAME VILLAGE AS ME? A MAN NAMED ZUO CI?

YES, I BELIEVE HE SAID HE WAS FROM THE SAME VILLAGE AS YOU, ACTUALLY. HIS NAME WAS ZUO CI.

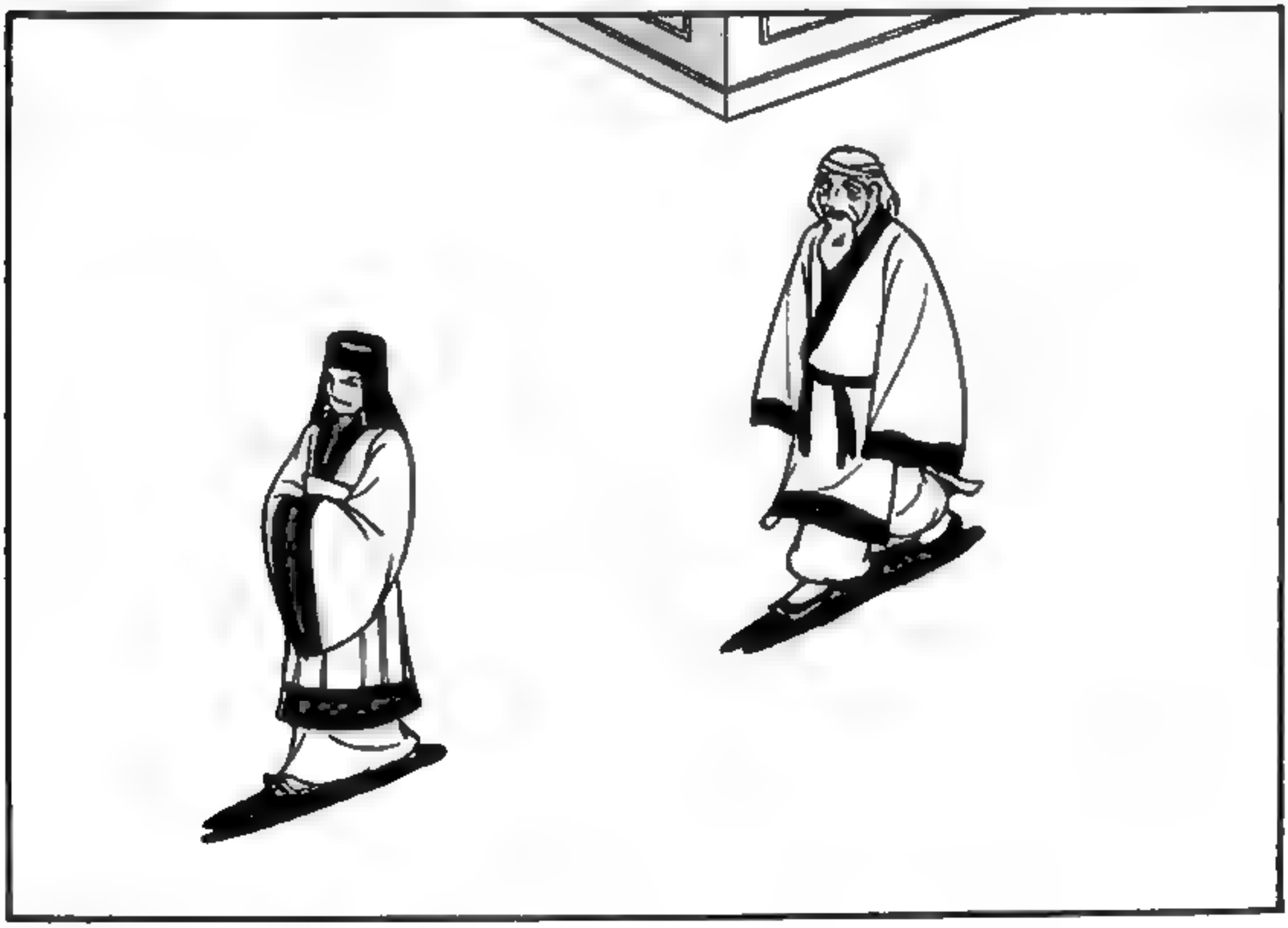
EXCUSE ME, SIRS.

I CAN'T RECALL A ZUO CI...


YES, LET HIM IN.


ZUO CI!?
AN ELDERLY MAN NAMED ZUO CI WISHES TO BE GRANTED AUDIENCE WITH THE CHANCELLOR.


YES, SIR.



OH MY! ARE THESE WENZHOU ORANGES?

SO YOU'RE THE MAN CALLED ZUO CI?

GOOD DAY TO YOU, PRINCE OF WEI.

YES, THEY LOOK PRETTY, BUT THEY'RE ALL EMPTY INSIDE.

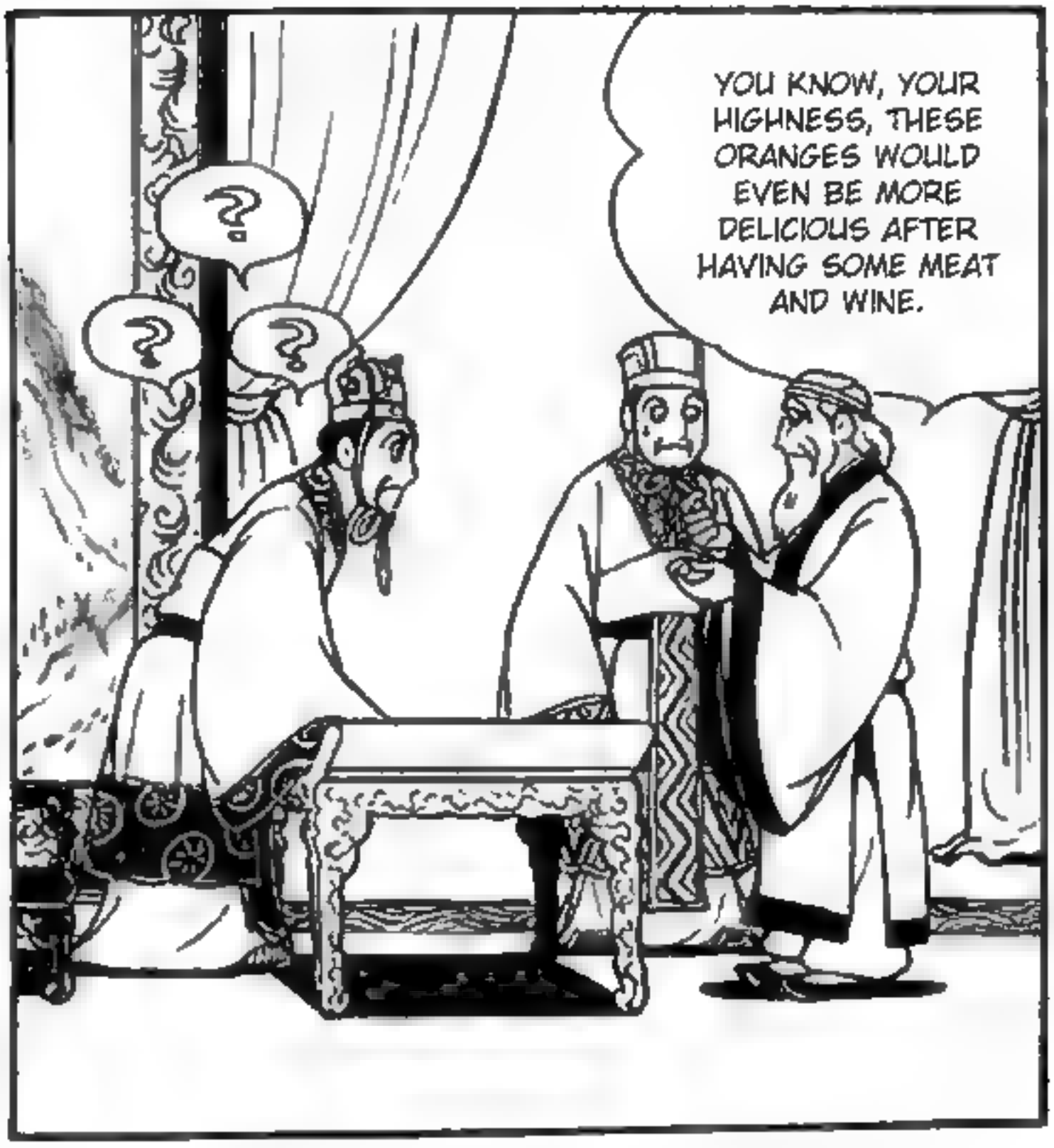
DON'T MIND IF I DO, YOUR HIGHNESS.

SURE, WHY NOT? NOT LIKE YOU CAN EAT THEM.

PERHAPS I CAN HAVE ONE THEN?

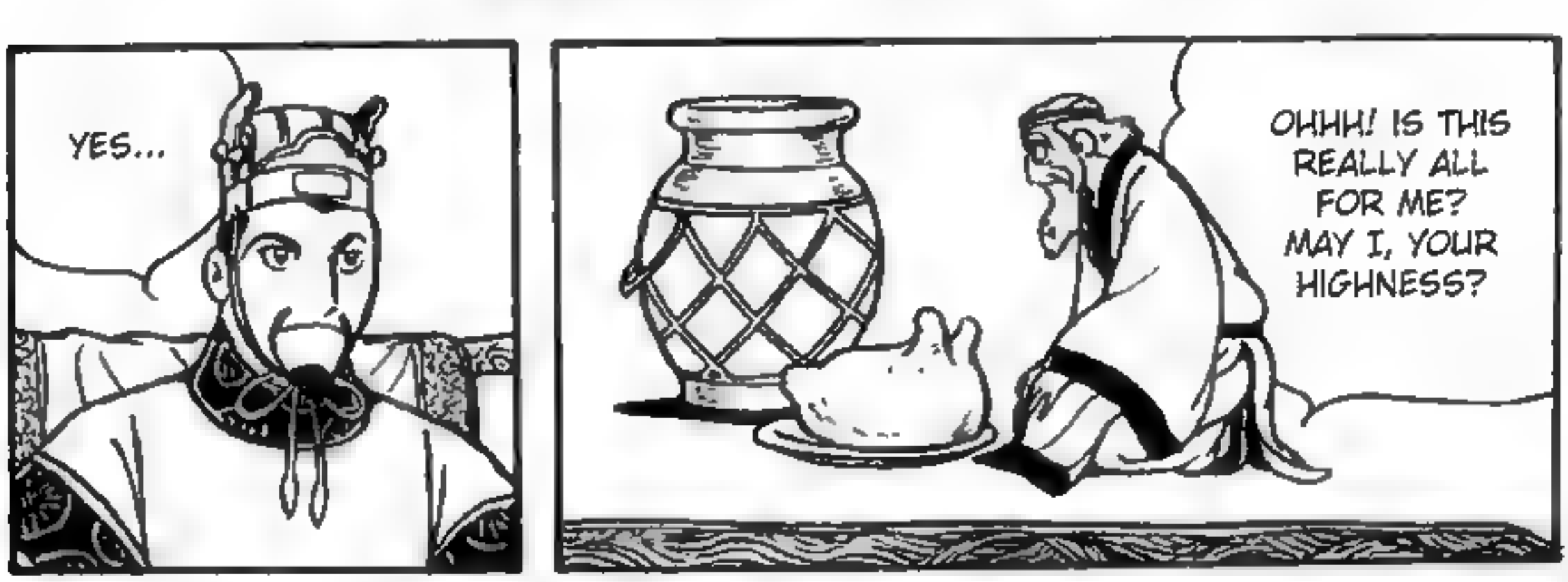
MMMM! QUITE JUICY FOR AN EMPTY ORANGE, EH?


YOU THERE. BRING SOME MEAT AND WINE.


?
?
?
YOU KNOW, YOUR HIGHNESS, THESE ORANGES WOULD EVEN BE MORE DELICIOUS AFTER HAVING SOME MEAT AND WINE.


YES, SIR.




YES...
OHHH! IS THIS REALLY ALL FOR ME? MAY I, YOUR HIGHNESS?


HOHO!
YUM


ヤバイ
ヤバイ
ヤバイ








NO MORE FOOD?

YOU'VE MASTERED SOME ARCANE DAOIST MAGIC, HAVEN'T YOU?

Y-YOU'RE NO NORMAL MAN, ARE YOU...

YOUR HIGHNESS HAS RISEN AS HIGH AS ANY SERVANT OF THE EMPIRE CAN HOPE TO RISE. TO DESIRE ANY MORE WEALTH AND FAME IS MERE FOLLY.

WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE WITH ME THEN?

RIGHT, YOU ARE. ON MT. EMEI IN SHU, I MEDIATED AND STUDIED THE "BOOK OF CONCEALING" FOR 30 YEARS BEFORE FINALLY MASTERING TAOIST MAGIC.

PERHAPS YOU'D BE MORE INTERESTED IN TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF AS MY NEW DISCIPLE? COME WITH ME TO MT. EMEI, AND THERE I SHALL TEACH YOU THE SECRET TO IMMORTALITY.

NOR HAVE I FOUND A SUITABLE SUCCESSOR TO PACIFY THE EMPIRE FOR ME.

ALAS, THE REALM IS NOT FULLY PACIFIED,

I HAVE TO SAY, THAT'S NOT A BAD OFFER.

HAND OVER THE EMPIRE TO LIU BEI!?

WHAT!

OH, NO PROBLEM THERE. THERE'S A CERTAIN IMPERIAL SCION WHO CAN FILL YOUR SHOES JUST FINE. I DARESAY THE PEOPLE WILL BE HAPPIER AND THE IMPERIAL COURT MORE SECURE UNDER HIS RULE. HIS NAME IS LIU BEI XUANDE, PERHAPS YOU'VE HEARD OF HIM?

GUARDS! SEIZE THIS MAN!

SO YOU'RE AN AGENT OF THAT REBEL, ARE YOU!?

YES, SIR!

FORCE HIM TO SPIT OUT WHATEVER LIU BEI ORDERED HIM TO DO HERE!

HAHAHA!

HAHA!

.....


COUGH IT UP, UNLESS YOU WANNA GET HURT, OLD MAN...!

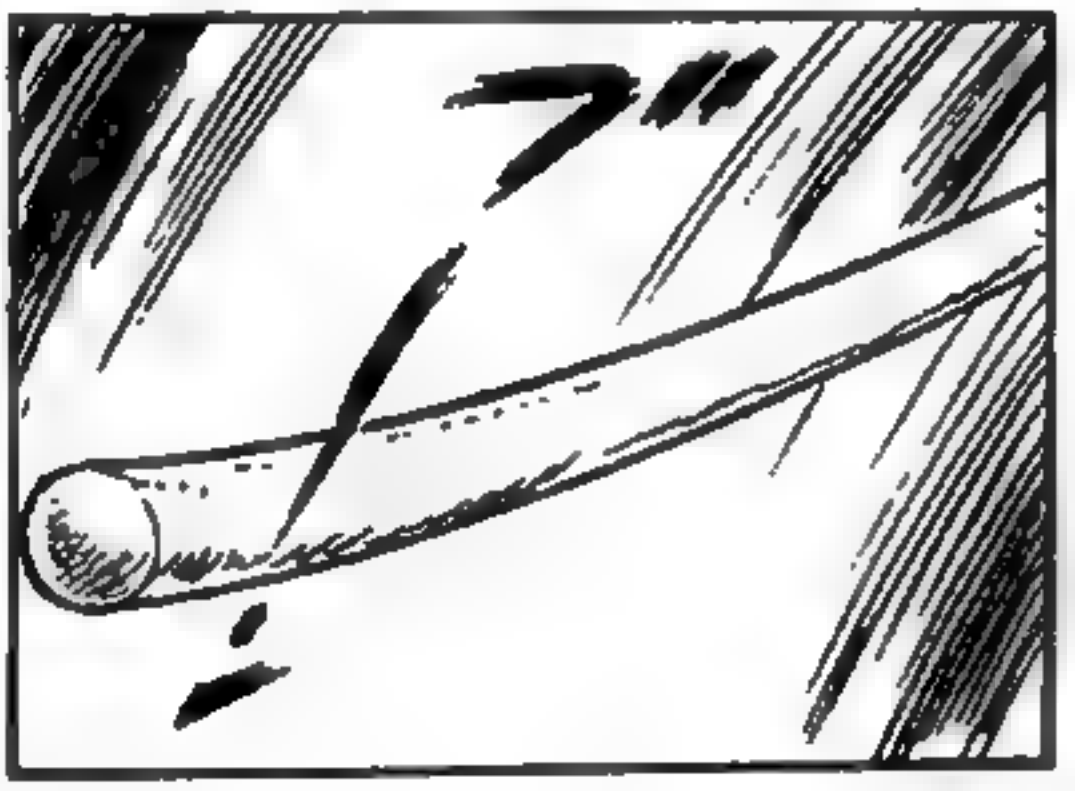



WHAT'S YOUR OBJEC-TIVE!?


SON OF A...


HAHAHA!





HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

EHEEHEE!

HUFF HUFF

PANT PANT

HEE HEE!

HOHOHO!

COME!

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS WITH THIS OLD FART? TIME TO SWITCH TACTICS.

UNLESS YOU CONFESS, DON'T THINK YOU'LL GET EVEN A SECOND OF SLEEP.

ZZZZZZ!

HE'S GIVING ME THE CREEPS...

AGHH!

HE'S SNORING! WHAT'S GOING ON!?

ZZZZ
ZZZZZZZZZ...

WE BETTER REPORT THIS TO THE CHANCELLOR.

HOW'D HE UNDO THE IRON CHAINS!?

HMM...

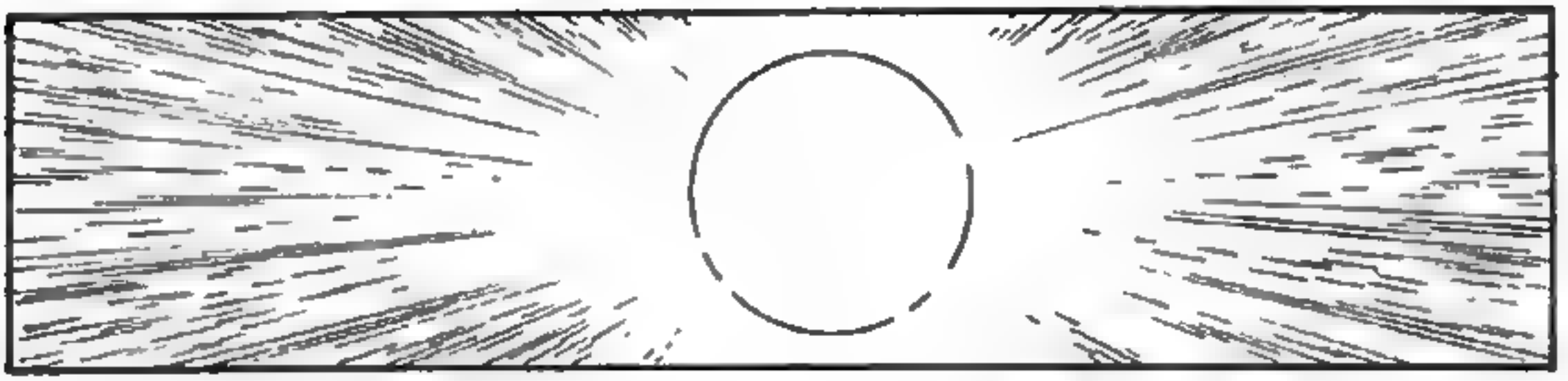
YES, I'M AFRAID WE'RE COMPLETELY STUMPED AS TO HOW TO EFFECTIVELY TORTURE HIM.

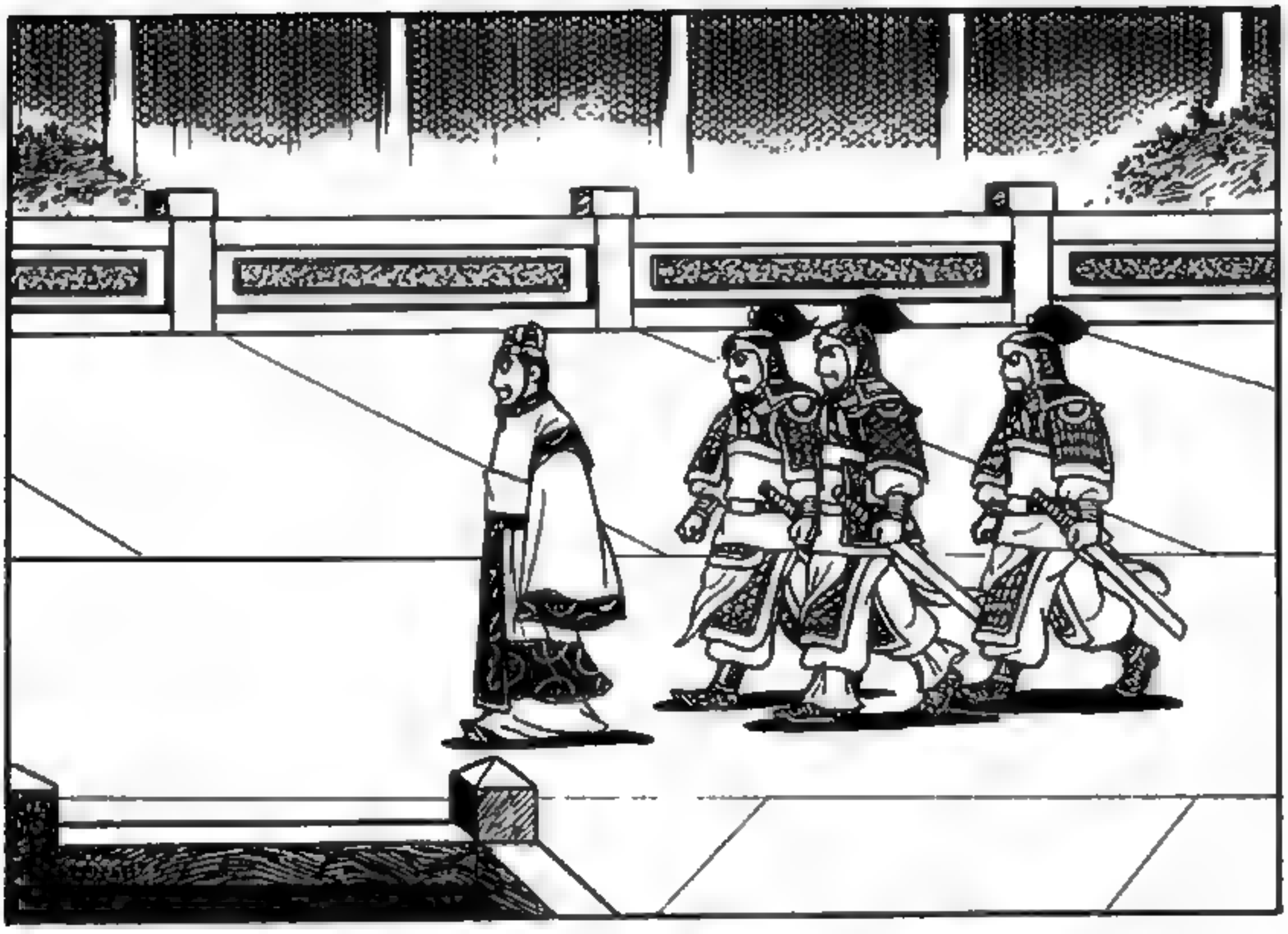
HE EVEN BROKE THE IRON CHAINS!?

AND SO ZUO CI WAS PLACED UNDER SOLITARY CONFINEMENT WITH NO FOOD OR WATER.

DON'T GIVE HIM ANY WATER OR FOOD UNTIL I SAY SO!

YES, SIR.


WELL...
UMM...
WELL, IT'S BEEN A WEEK SINCE HE'S HAD ANY FOOD OR WATER. HOW'S HE HOLDING UP?
RATHER THAN LOOKING DEBILITATED, HE LOOKS LIVELIER THAN EVER, CHANCELLOR...
?
WHAT IS IT?
LET ME BE THE JUDGE OF THAT!
HE LOOKS EVEN LIVELIER!?



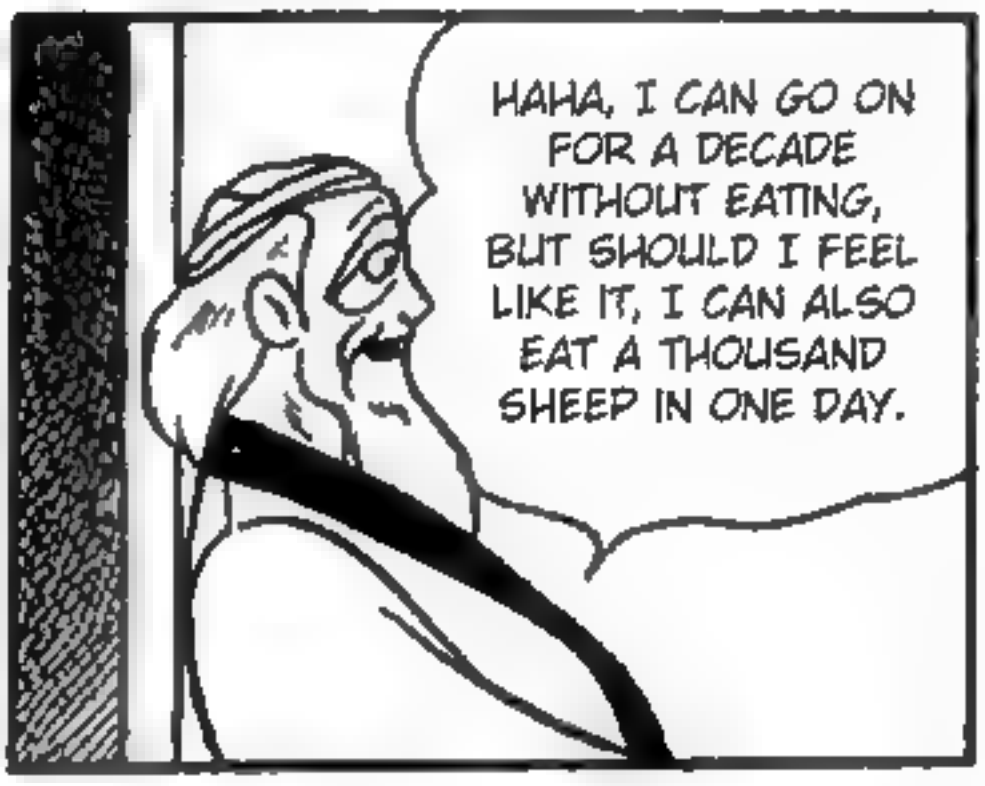



YES, SIR!
OPEN THE DOOR.


A... ARE YOU A PHANTOM OR A HUMAN?


AH, GOOD MORNING, YOUR HIGHNESS.


TO PUNISH ME WITH SUCH MEASURES AS THESE IS FOR A MORTAL TO RESENT THE HEAVENS AND SPIT AT THE SKY.

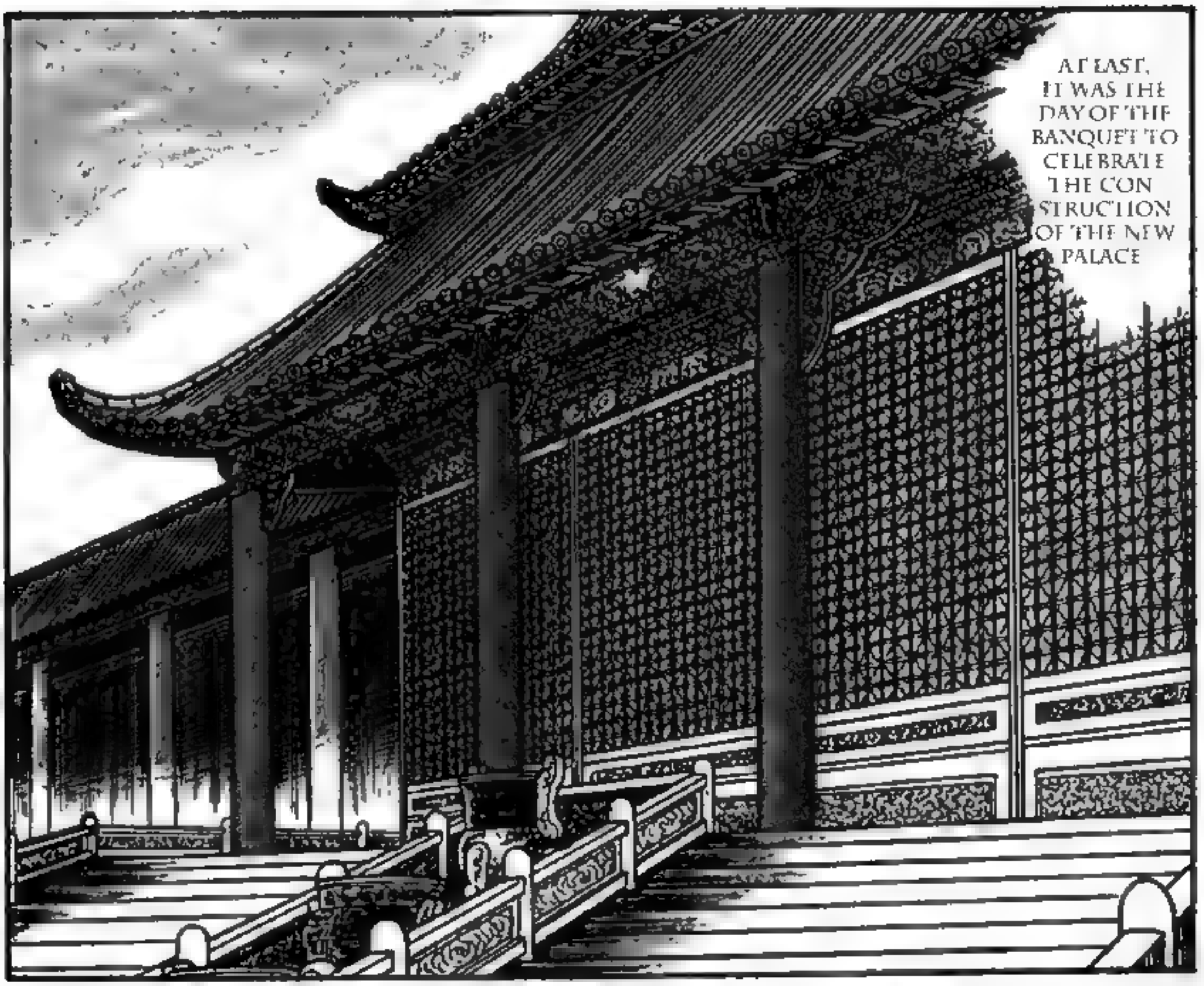

HAHA, I CAN GO ON FOR A DECADE WITHOUT EATING, BUT SHOULD I FEEL LIKE IT, I CAN ALSO EAT A THOUSAND SHEEP IN ONE DAY.




HIS MOUTH IS EVEN LIVELIER, THAT'S FOR SURE...


SHUT THE DOOR!

SORCERY


AT LAST, IT WAS THE DAY OF THE BANQUET TO CELEBRATE THE CON STRUCTION OF THE NEW PALACE


COUNTLESS DISHES CONTAINING THE MOST DELECTABLE AND EXOTIC CUISINE FROM EACH REGION OF THE EMPIRE WERE BROUGHT OUT

HM?

?

AH, SO THE GUESTS ARE ALL HERE.

AH!

WHAT KIND OF FLOWERS WOULD YOU LIKE, PRINCE OF WEI?

SEEMS RATHER GLOOMY FOR THERE TO BE NO FLOWERS AT A FINE BANQUET.

NO ONE INVITED YOU. WHAT IS YOUR REASON FOR COMING HERE?





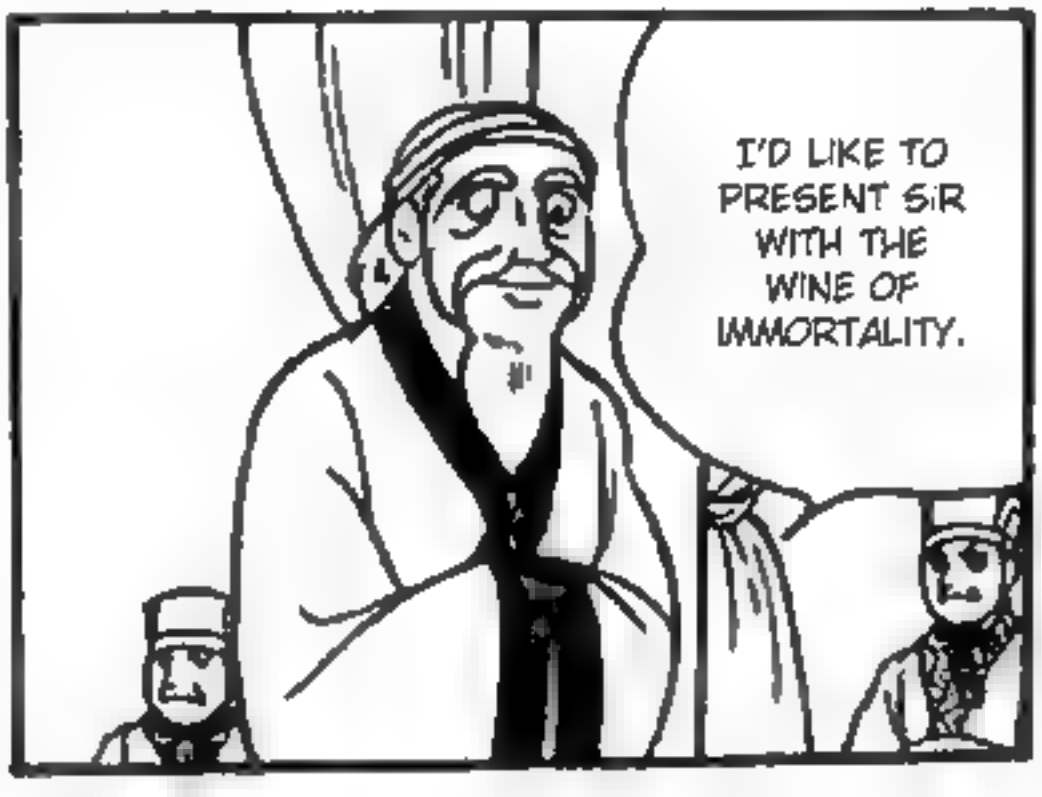

HMPH. HOW ABOUT A PEONY THEN?


AHH!




WHA!




I'D LIKE TO PRESENT SIR WITH THE WINE OF IMMORTALITY.

ALLOW ME TO TEST FOR POISON FIRST.

AHH! A WINE LIKE NO OTHER!

T-T-THE LIQUID'S SPLIT LIKE ICE...!

YOU EXPECT ME TO DRINK SOMETHING SO OMINOUS!?


AHH!




AGHH!


H-HOW CAN THIS BE...?
OHHH!

I DON'T KNOW, SIR...

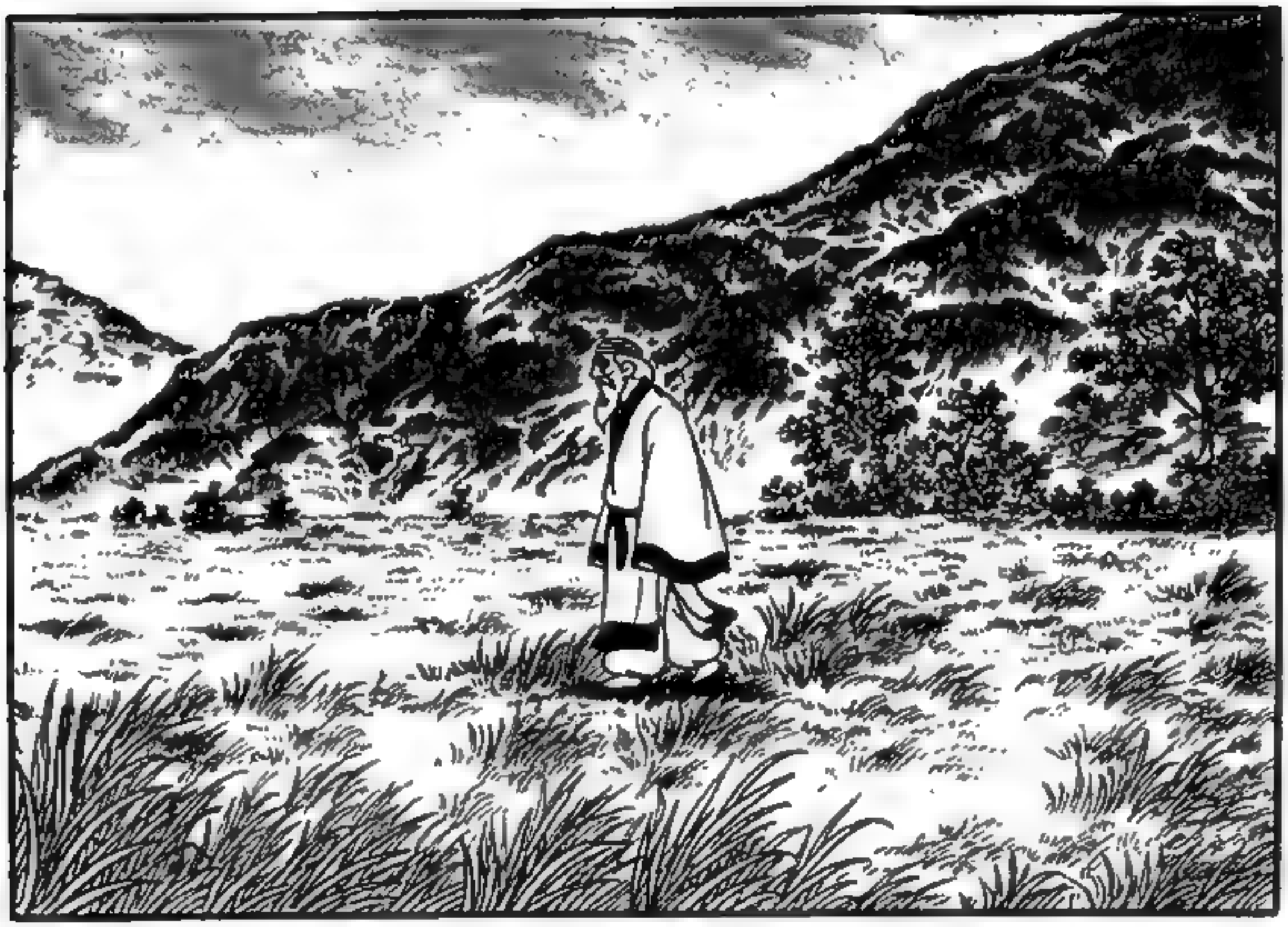
WHERE'D THE OLD MAN GO?

HUH?

GUARDS! OUR ORDERS ARE TO FIND AND ARREST ZUO CI, EVEN IF WE HAVE TO TURN OVER EVERY ROCK AND TREE!

YES, SIR!

CATCH HIM AT ONCE! A MAN LIKE HIM WILL ONLY DISRUPT ORDER AND SET A BAD INFLUENCE ON THE POPULACE!



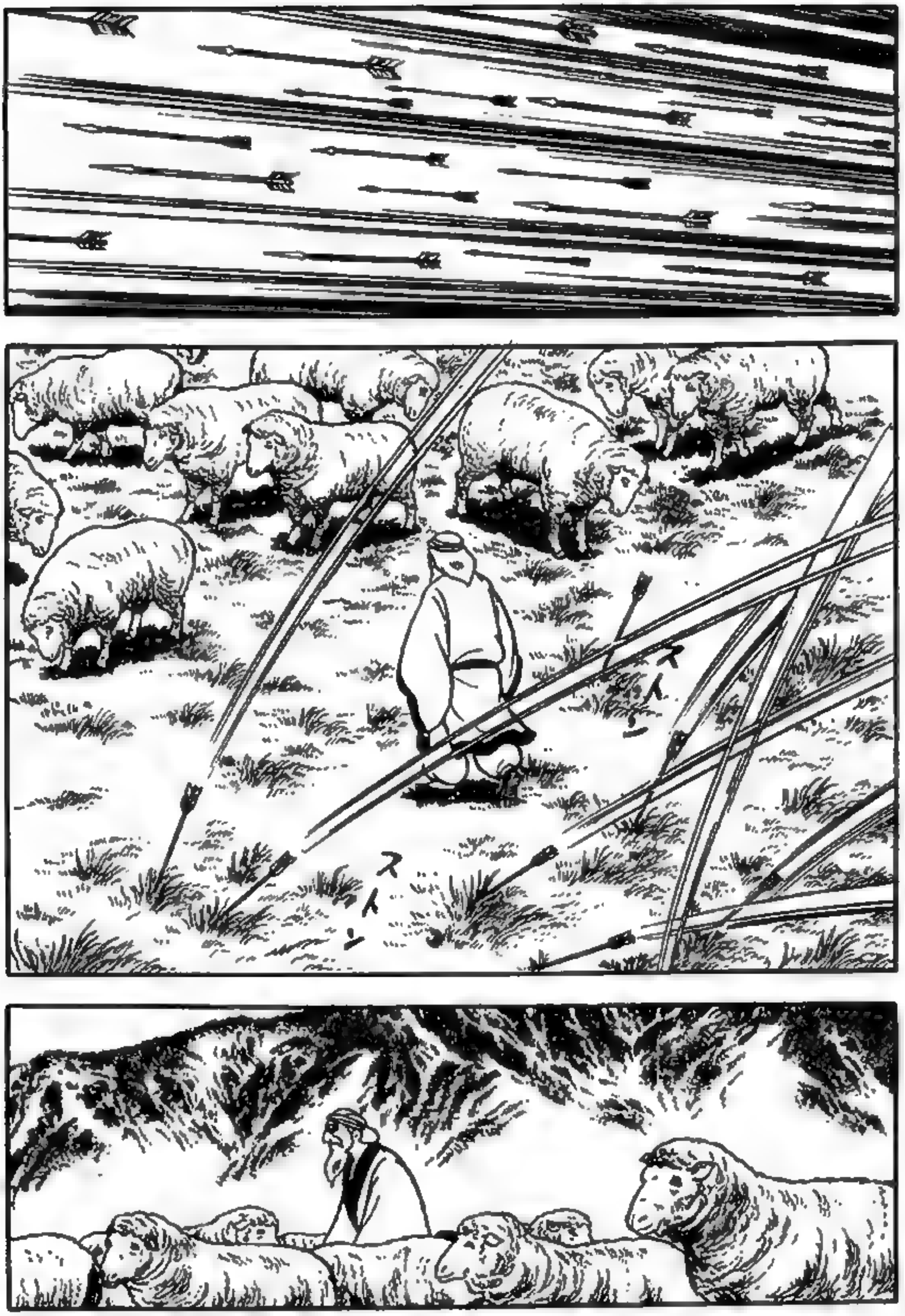



AH!
THERE
HE IS!


HALT!


BUT FOR SOME REASON, ZUO CI ALWAYS STAYED SEVERAL PACES AHEAD NO MATTER HOW FAST THE SOLDIERS CHASED AFTER HIM

DAMN IT! ARCHERS, SHOOT!

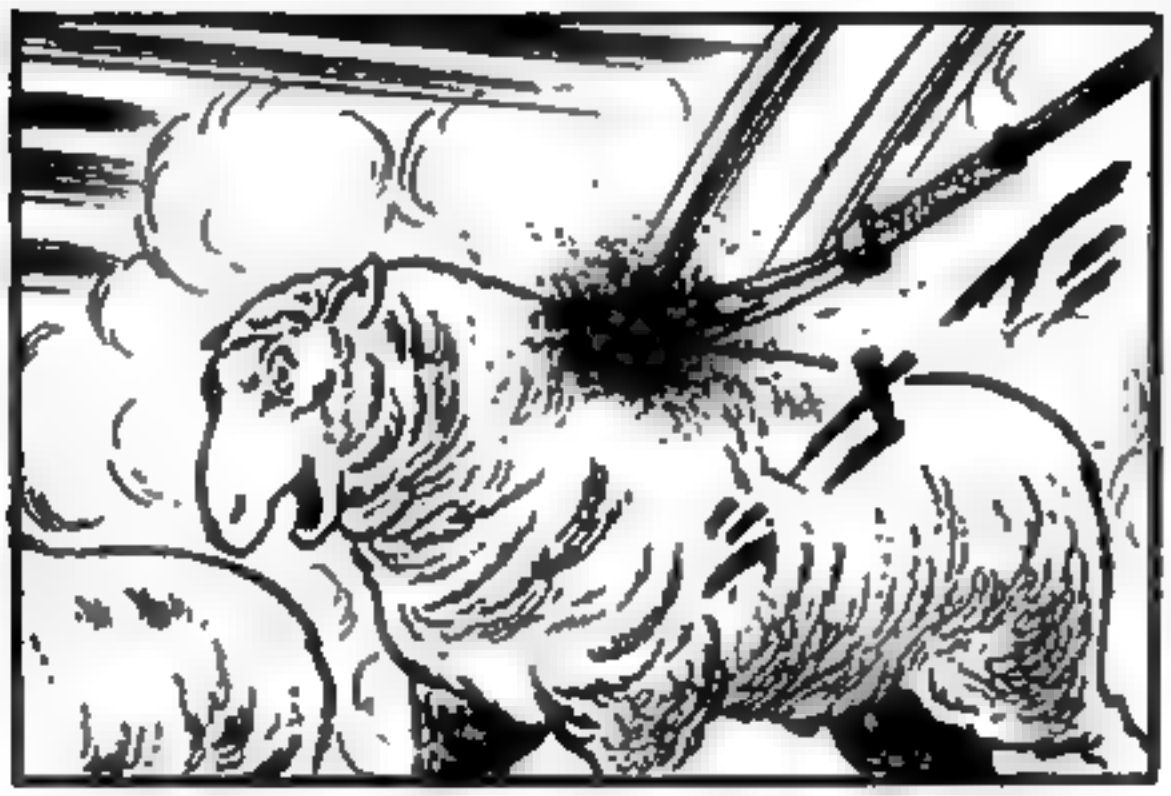


WE MUST FIND HIM!

HE'S HIDDEN HIMSELF AMONG THE FLOCK OF SHEEP!

BAAAAHHHH!

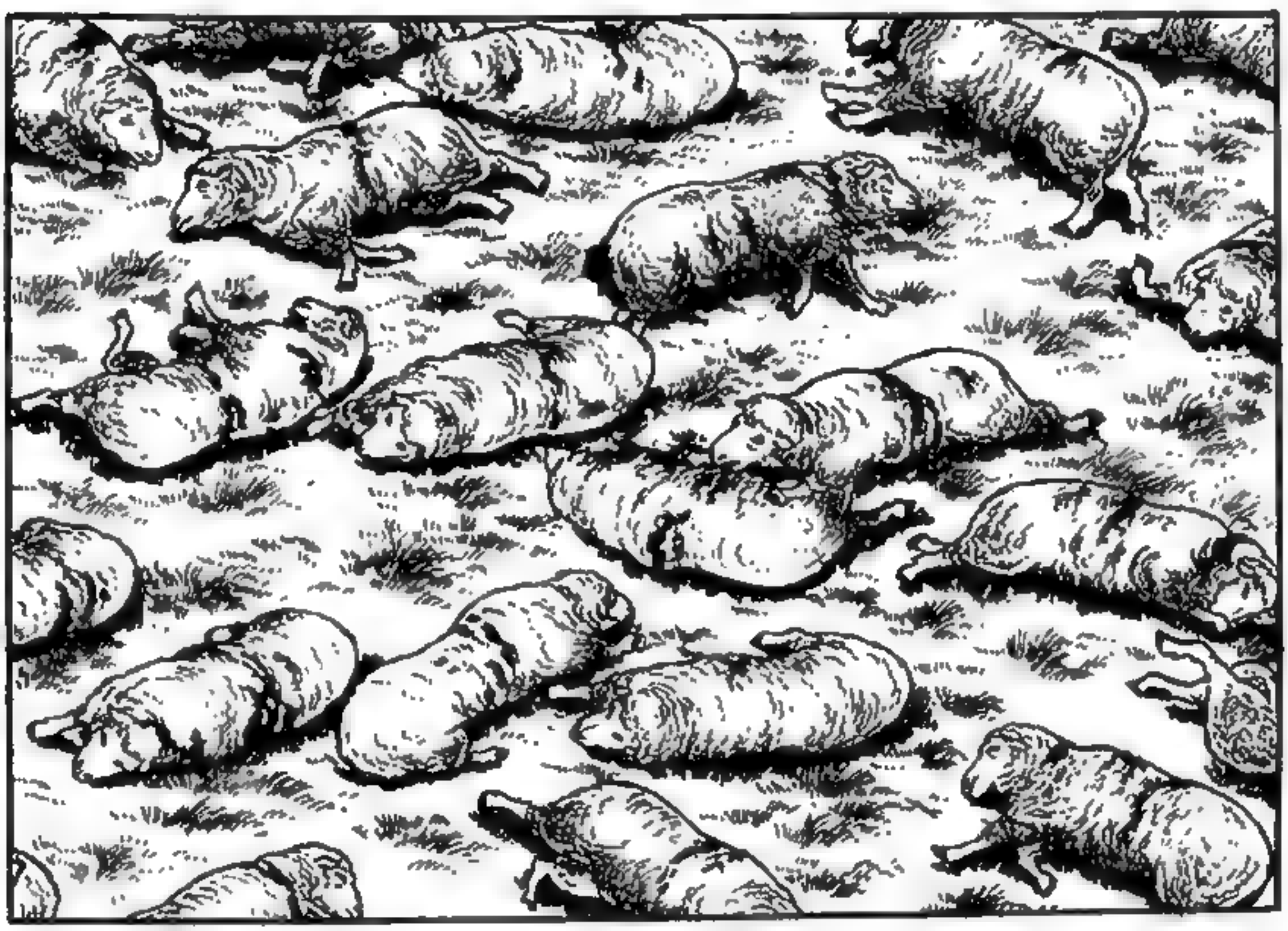
BAAAAHHHH!




THESE DAMN SHEEP ARE GETTING IN THE WAY!




BAAAHHHH!



WAAHHHH!

WHY'D YA HAFTA KILL ALL MY SHEEP!?

YOU USELESS SOLDIERS! I HATE YOU ALL!

HE COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR AWAY! SPREAD OUT AND KEEP SEARCHING!

SIR, I JUST RECEIVED A VERY ODD REQUEST.

FORGIVE ME, CHANCELLOR.

SO YOU LOST SIGHT OF HIM?

AN ODD REQUEST?

APPARENTLY, THE FLOCK OF SHEEP THE SOLDIERS SLAUGHTERED DURING THEIR SEARCH FOR ZUO CI WERE ALL FOUND ALIVE THIS MORNING. THE BOY SHEEP-HERDER THUS WISHES TO APOLOGIZE TO THE CAPTAIN FOR HIS INSULTS YESTERDAY.

YES, THEY WERE FOUND GRAZING GRASS AS USUAL.

THE SHEEP WERE BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE!?

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF THAT OLD MAN WERE TO GO AROUND SHOWING OFF HIS MAGIC AND TELLING THE PEOPLE THAT LIU BEI SHOULD BE CHANCELLOR?

HOW EERIE...

ZUO CI MUST BE APPREHENDED AND EXECUTED IMMEDIATELY...

YES, SIR.

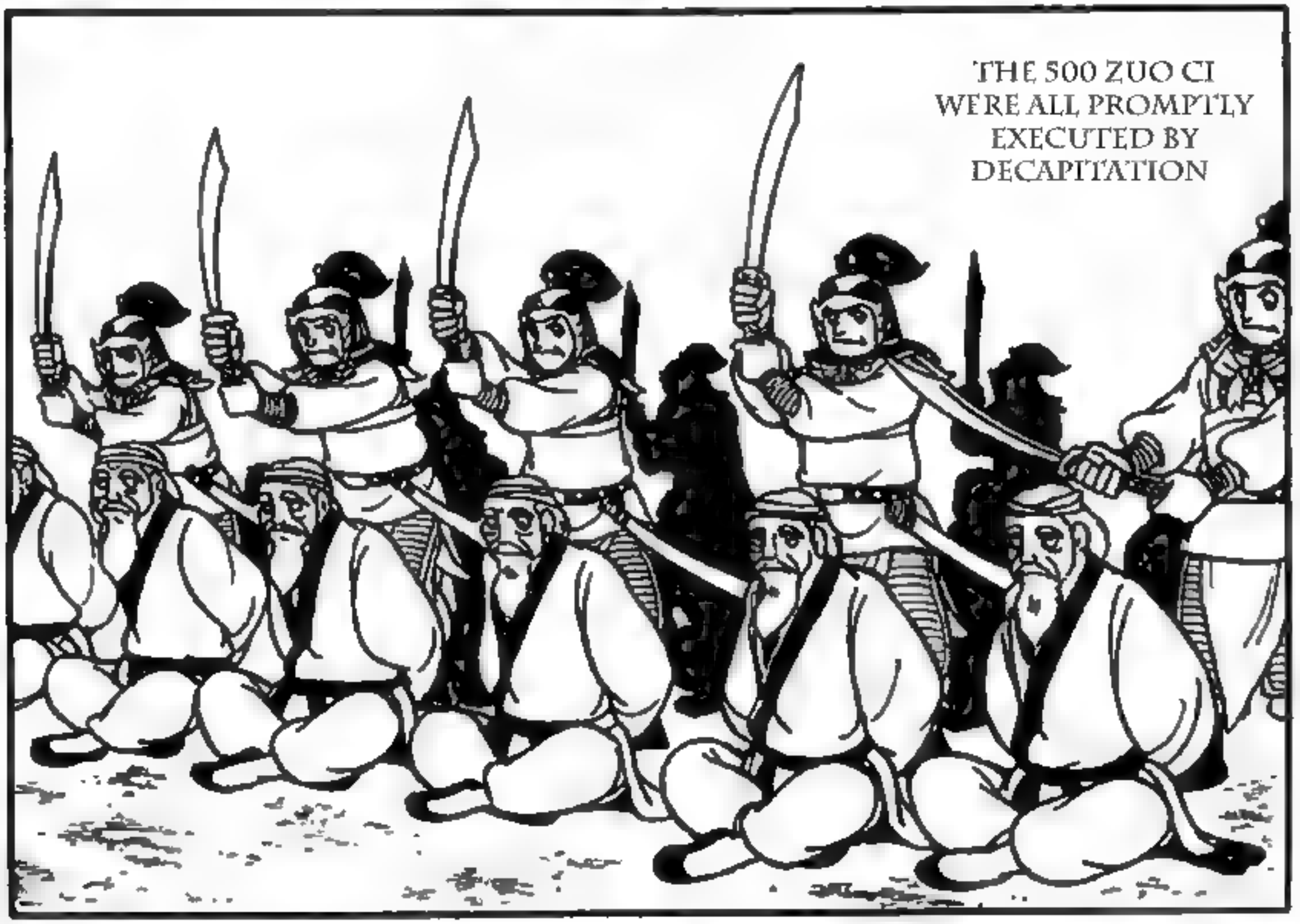
GET A PAINTER TO DRAW ZUO CI'S FACE AT ONCE!

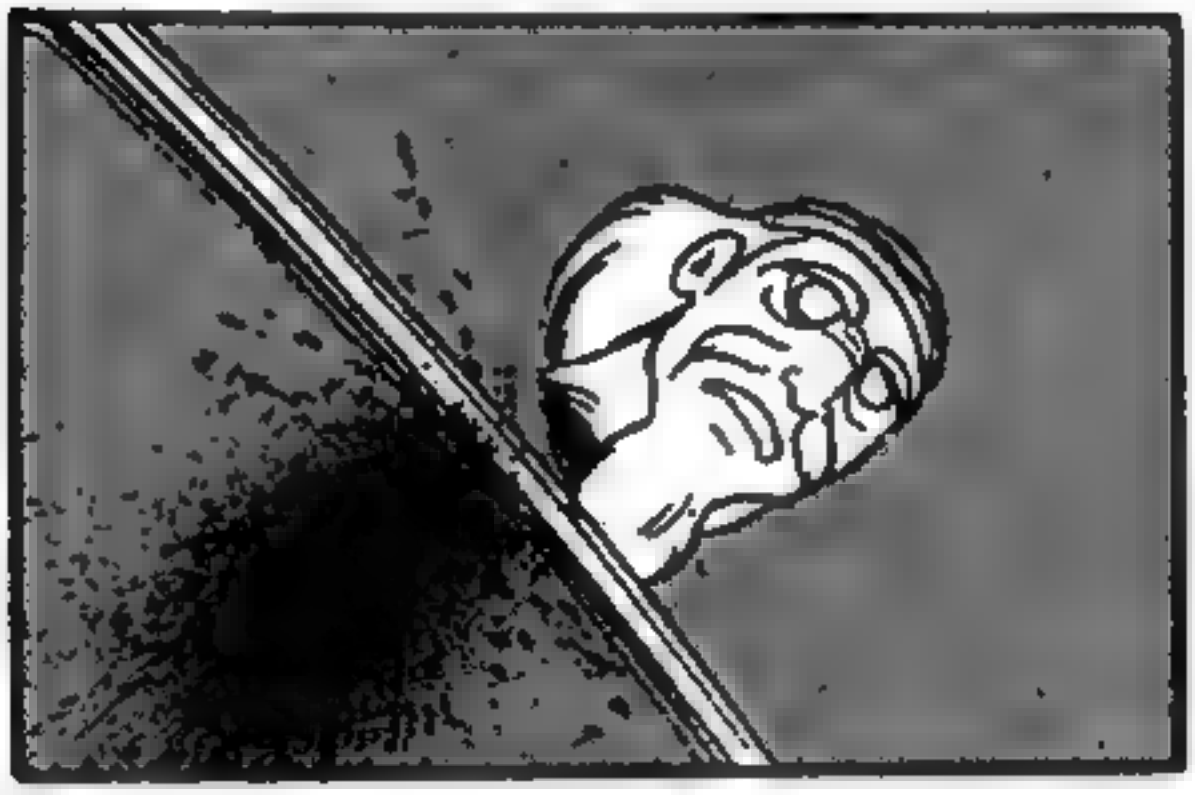

YES, THIS WILL DO.
RIGHT AWAY, SIR.
USE THIS AS A TEMPLATE TO CREATE WANTED-POSTERS. THEY'RE TO BE POSTED ALL THROUGHOUT THE REALM!


THUS, ZUO CI'S PORTRAIT WAS POSTED THROUGH OUT THE LANDS
WITHIN 3 DAYS, NUMEROUS ZUO CI WERE ARRESTED IN EACH REGION
WHEN THEY WERE ALL BROUGHT BEFORE CAO CAO, THEY NUMBERED 500

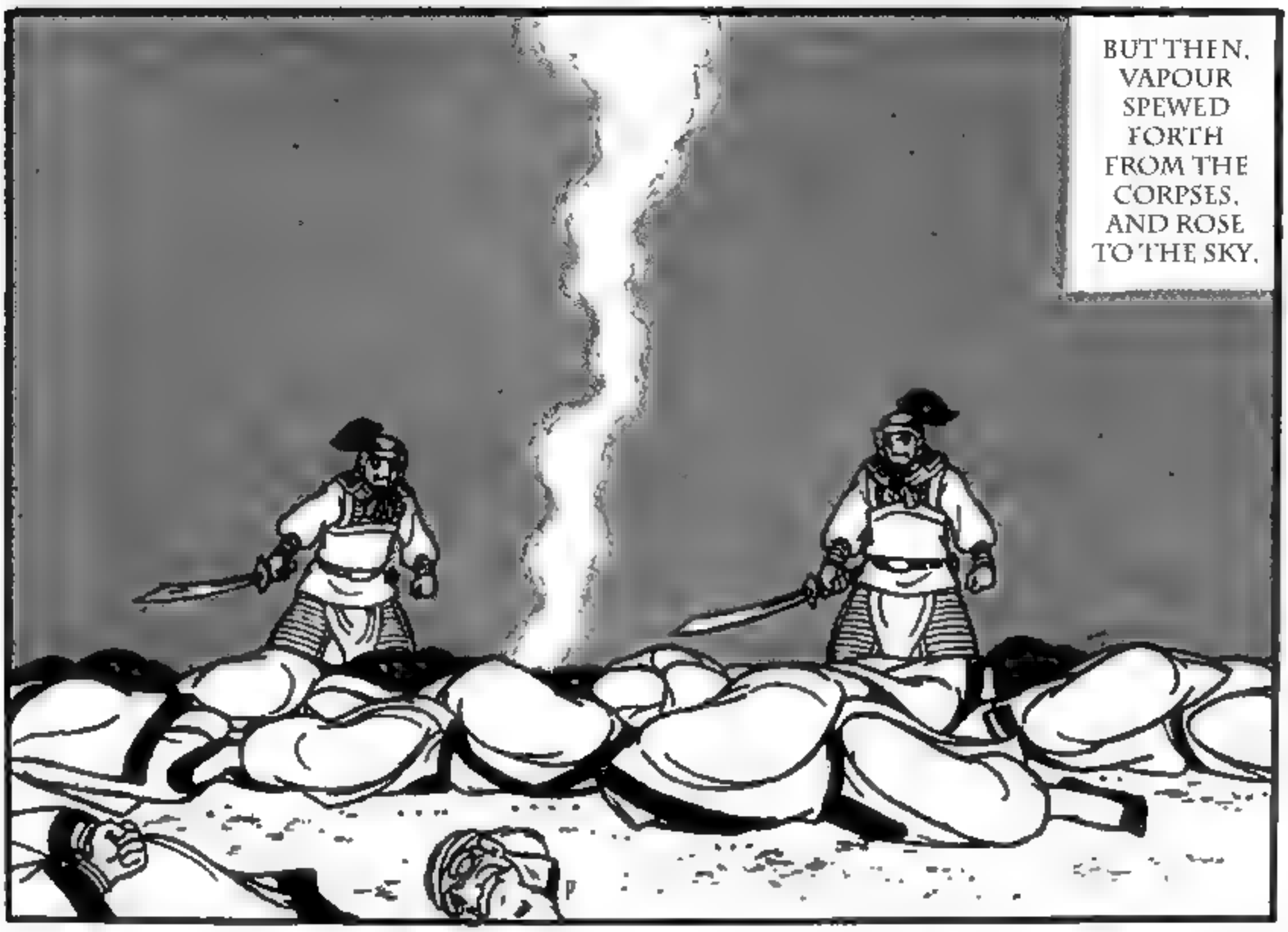

OFF WITH ALL THEIR HEADS!


HE'S USED SOME FOUL SORCERY AGAIN...
H... HE...


THE 500 ZUO CI WERE ALL PROMPTLY EXECUTED BY DECAPITATION






BUT THEN, VAPOUR SPEWED FORTH FROM THE CORPSES, AND ROSE TO THE SKY.


WHERE IT TRANSFORMED INTO ANOTHER ZUO CI, RIDING ON A GRLAT CRANE.


THE CRANE FLEW OVER TO THE PRINCE OF WEI'S PALACE.

WHERE'S THAT LAUGHING COMING FROM?

?

IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM ABOVE, SIR.

AH!

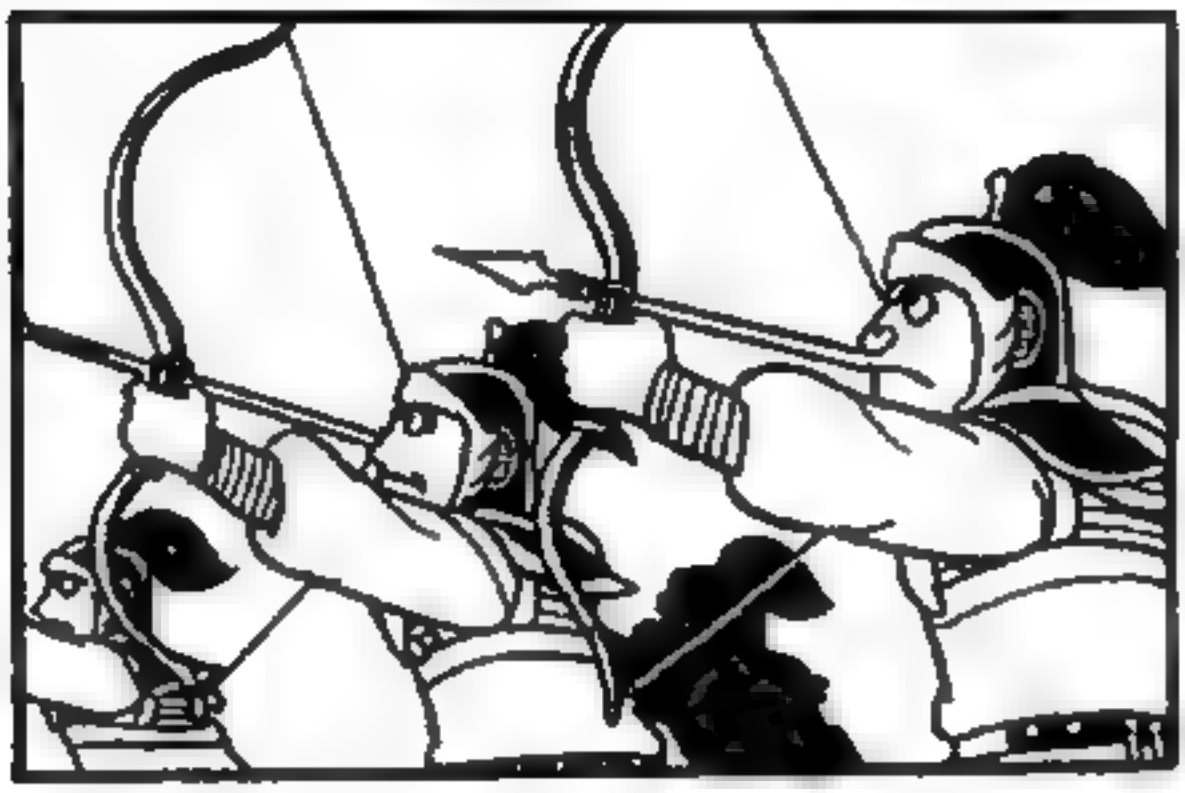



AHAHAHA!
HAHAHA!

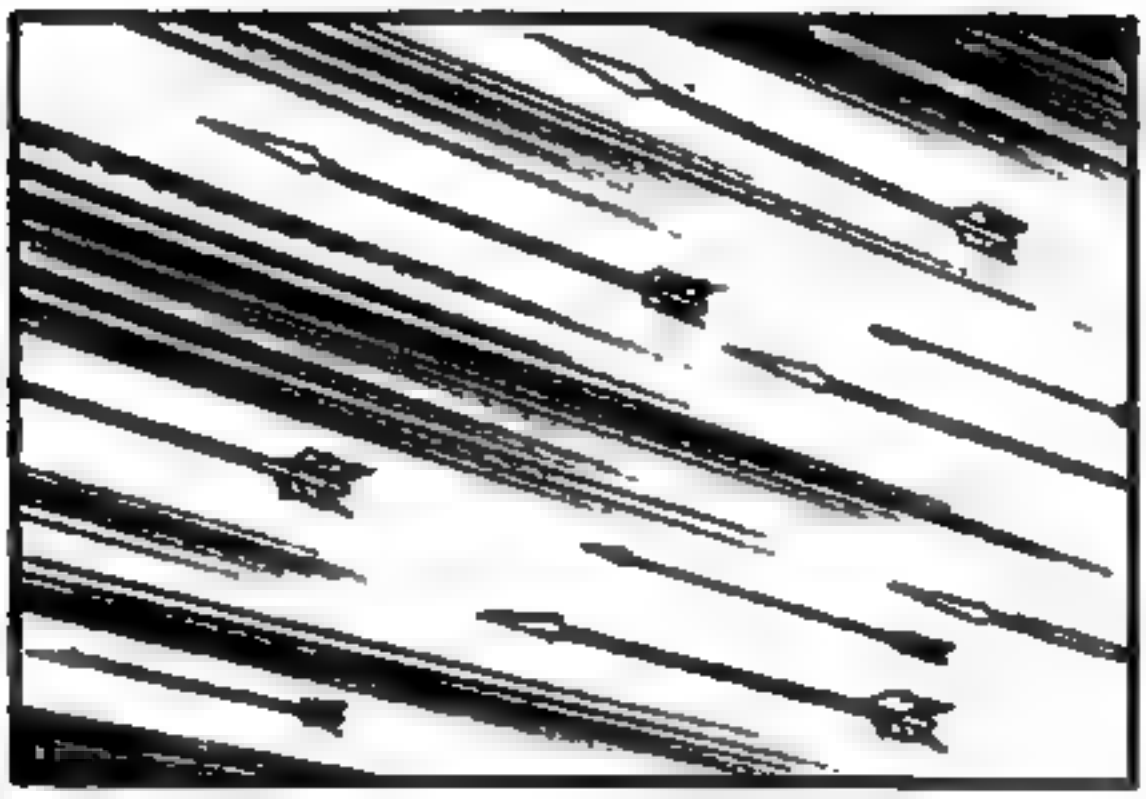


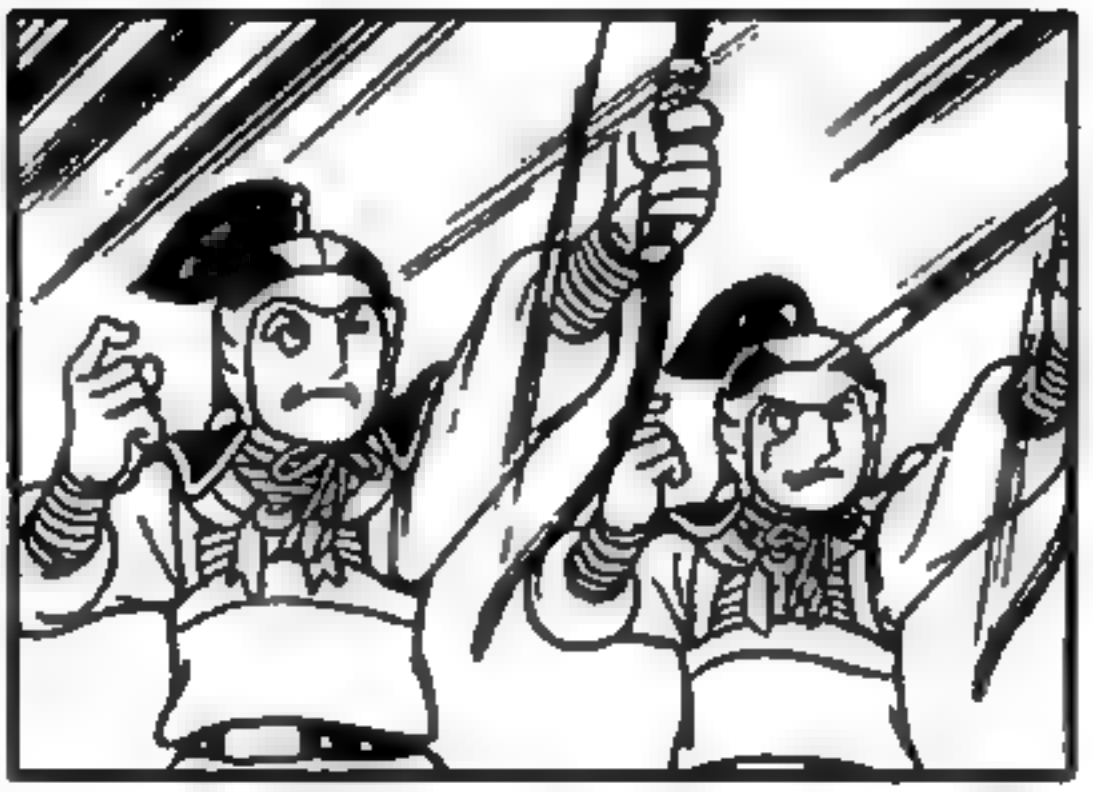

Y-YES, SIR!
WHAT'RE YOU ALL STANDING AROUND FOR! SHOOT HIM DOWN!

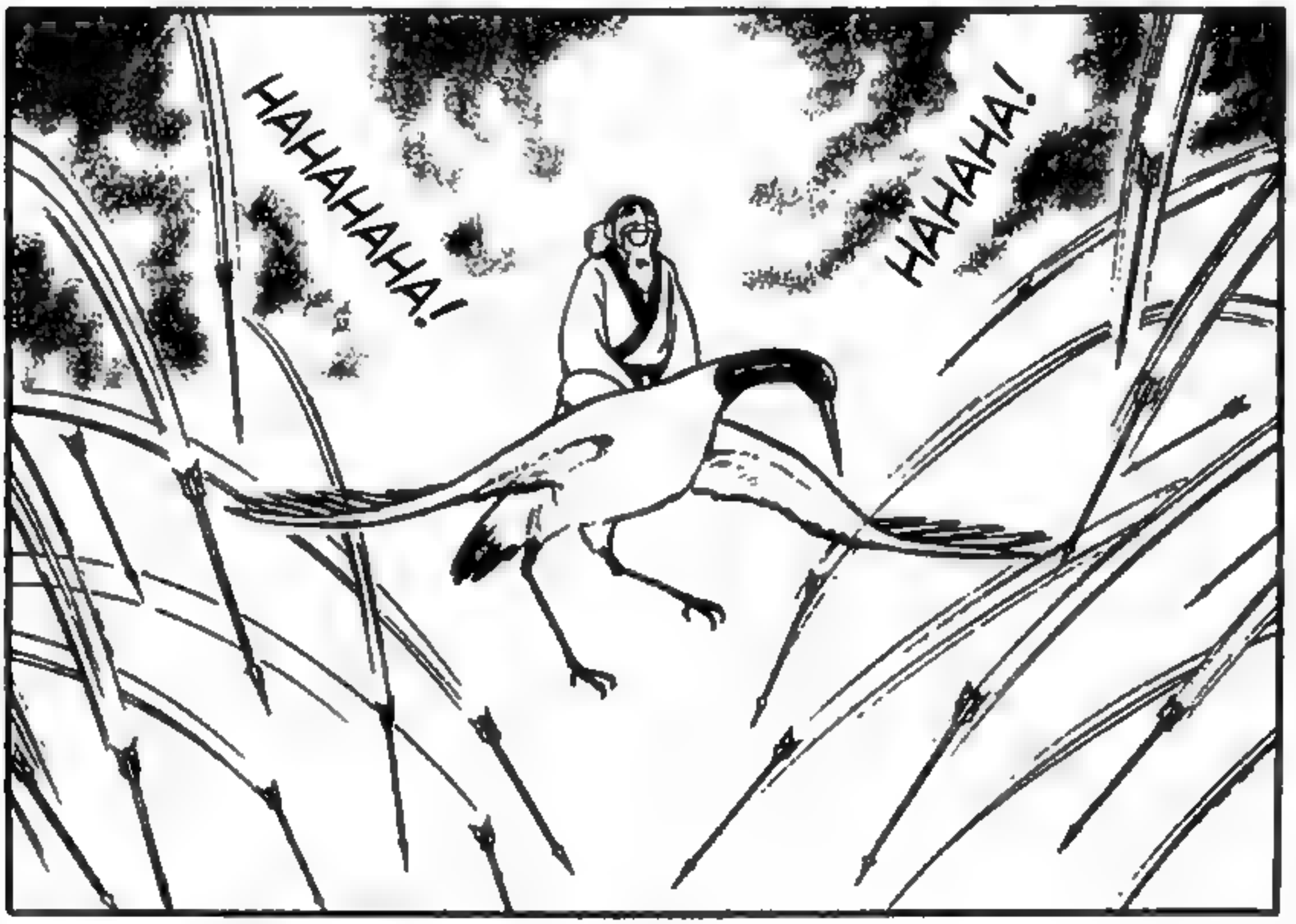

NGHH!




ARCHERS, SHOOT!

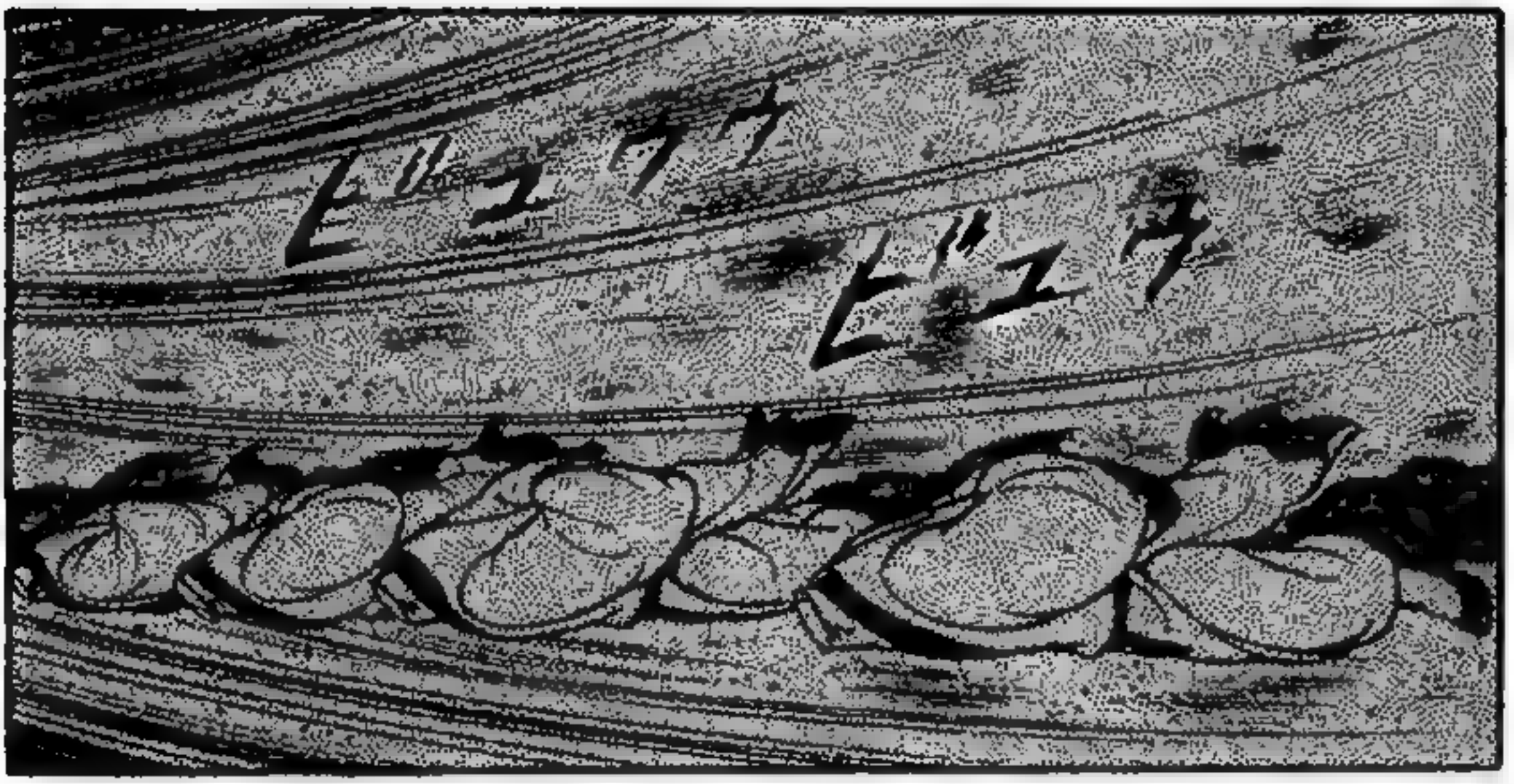





HAHAHAHA!
HAHAHA!

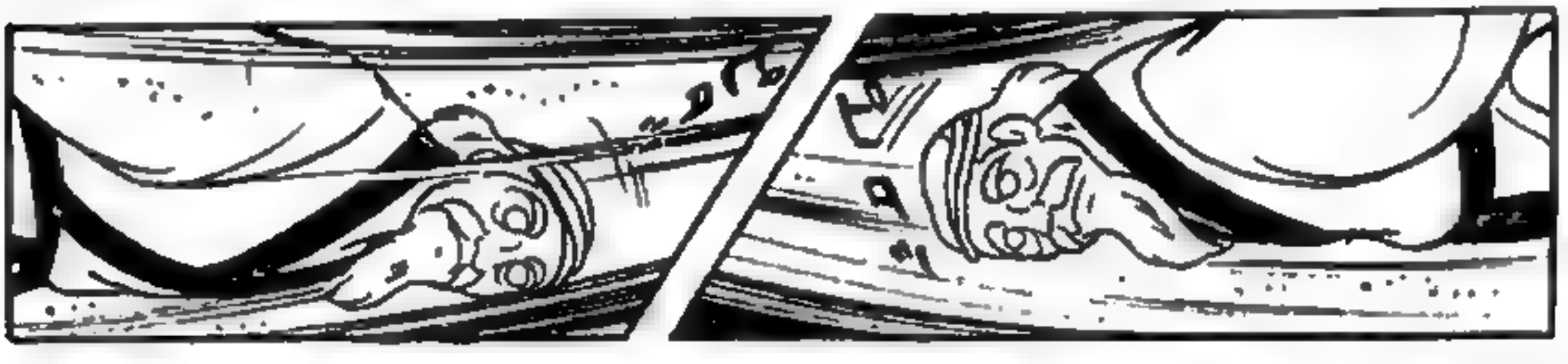



ヒュウウウ
ACK!
W-WHOA!
ドゴォ
ドゴォ













EHEEHEE!

AGH!

OHOHO HOHO!

T-THE CORPSES ARE WALKING!

I... I FEEL ILL...

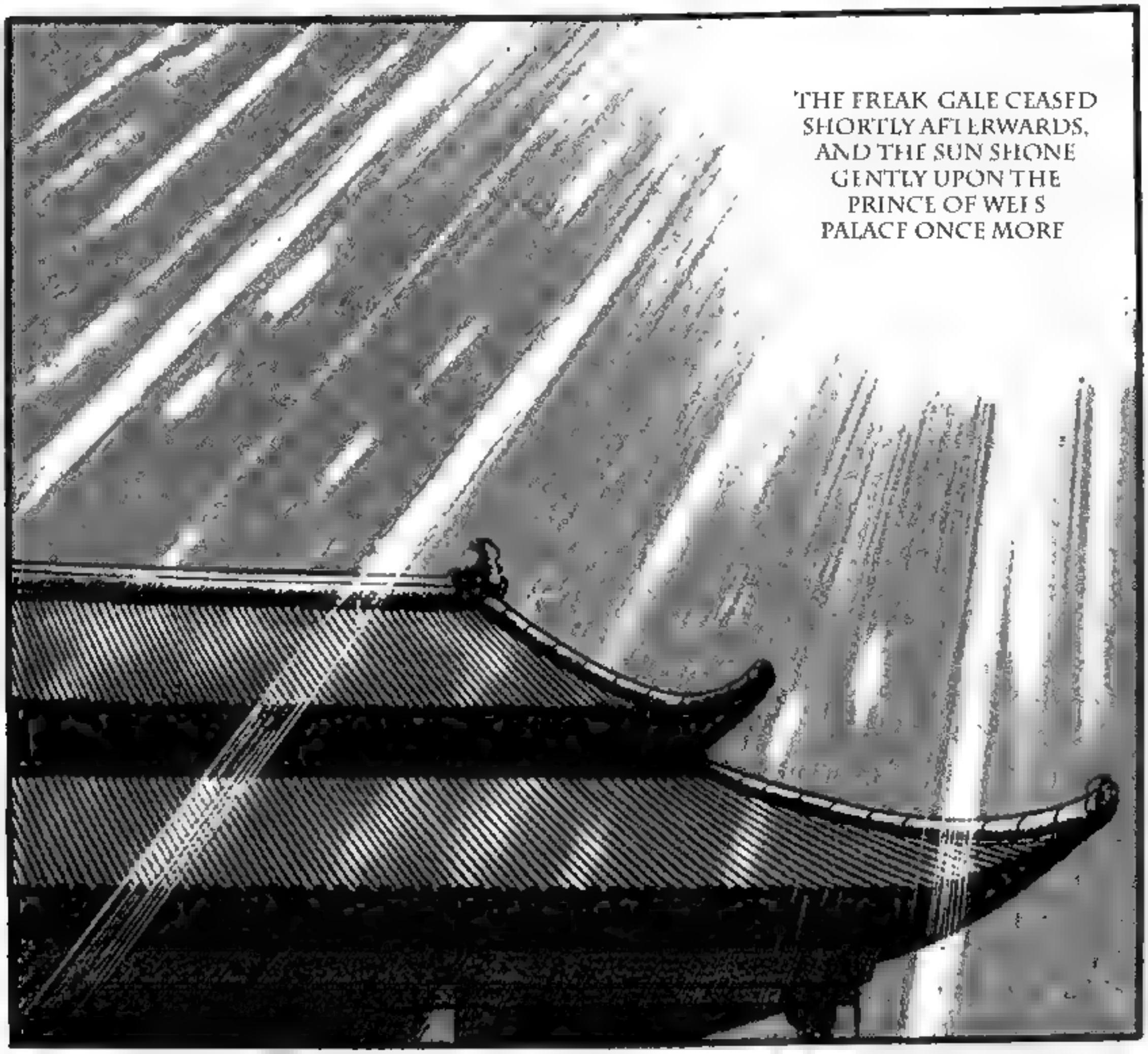
WE MUST QUICKLY TAKE HIM TO HIS BED!

YOUR EXCELLENCY!

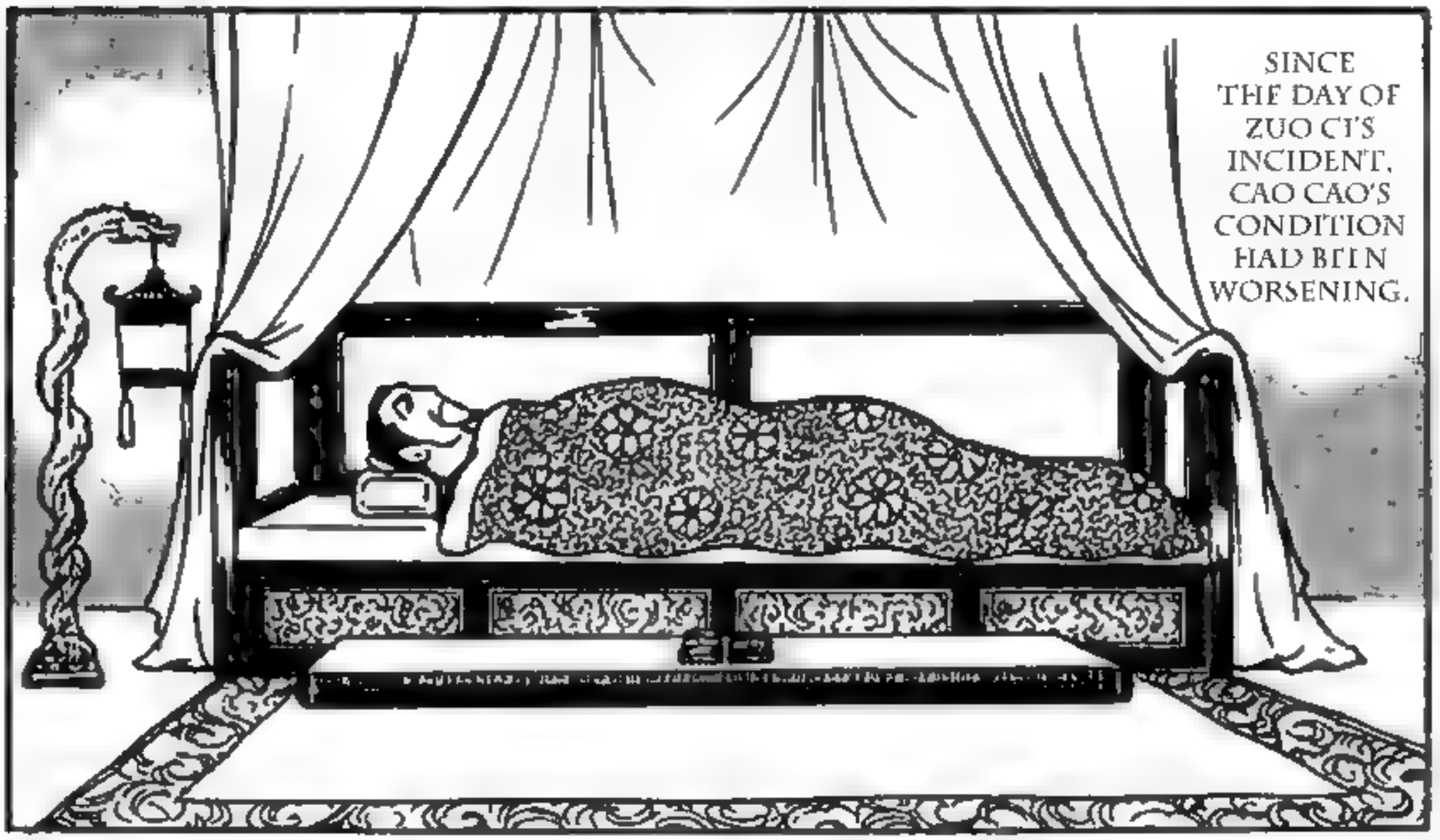
AHAHAHAHA!

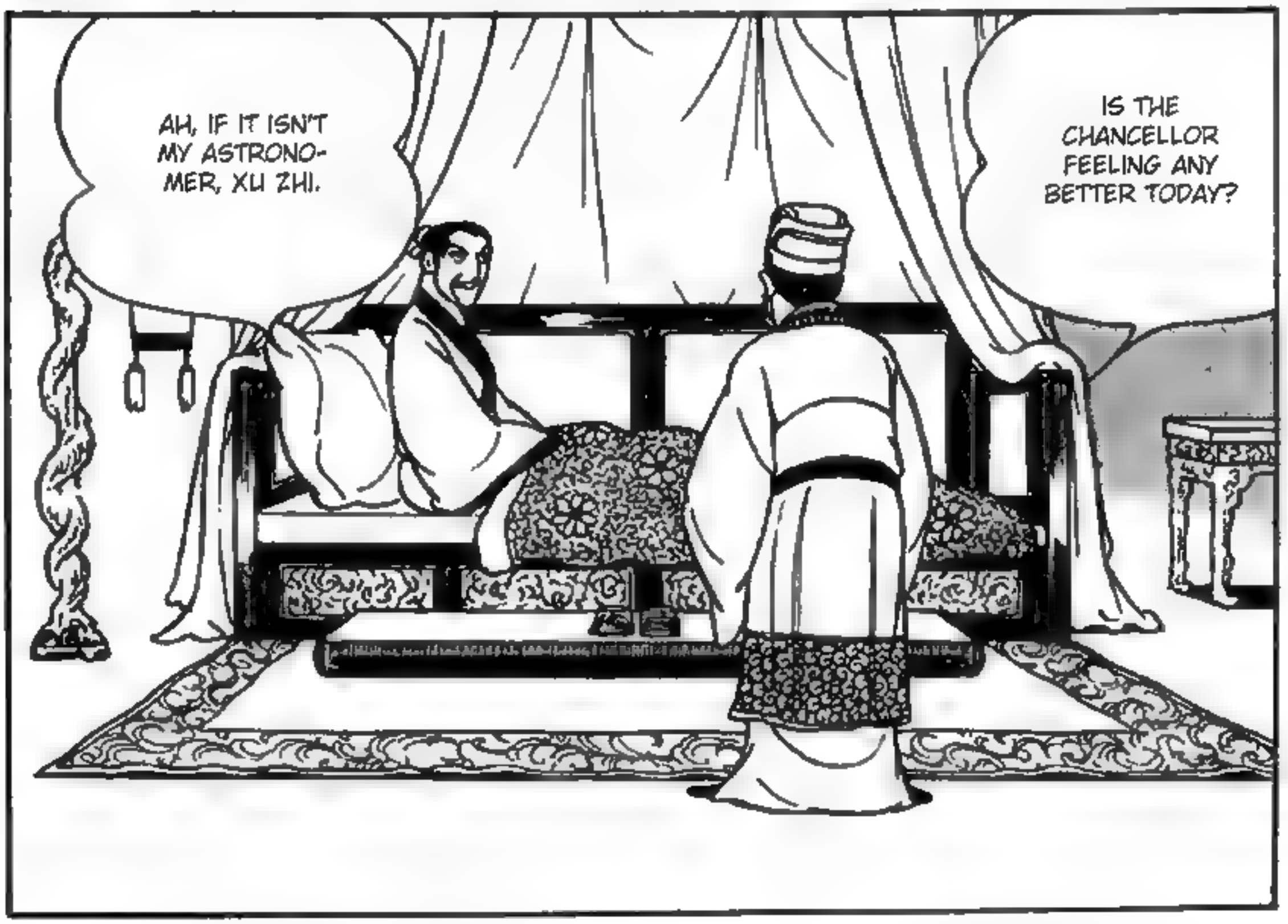
ZUO CI DISAPPEARED ACROSS THE HORIZON ALONG WITH HIS CACKLING


THE CORPSES, TOO, WALKED OFF INTO THE DISTANCE AND WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN


THE FREAK GALE CEASED SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, AND THE SUN SHONE GENTLY UPON THE PRINCE OF WEI'S PALACE ONCE MORE

THE DIVINATOR OF PINGYUAN





YES, SIR.

AH THAT'S RIGHT, YOU'RE ALSO A PRACTICING DIVINATOR, ARE YOU NOT?

I CAN'T SEEM TO FEEL ANY BETTER NO MATTER WHAT MEDICINE I TAKE.

IN THAT CASE, GUAN LU IS YOUR MAN.

COULD YOU PERHAPS USE YOUR SKILLS TO SEE IF MY ILLNESS HAS A SUPERNATURAL DIMENSION TO IT?

GUAN LU?

I ASSUME HE'S PERFORMED SOME INCREDIBLE FEATS TO HAVE ATTAINED SUCH FAME, CORRECT?

IS HE?

YES, HE IS THE MOST FAMOUS DIVINATOR IN THE EMPIRE.

GLADLY.

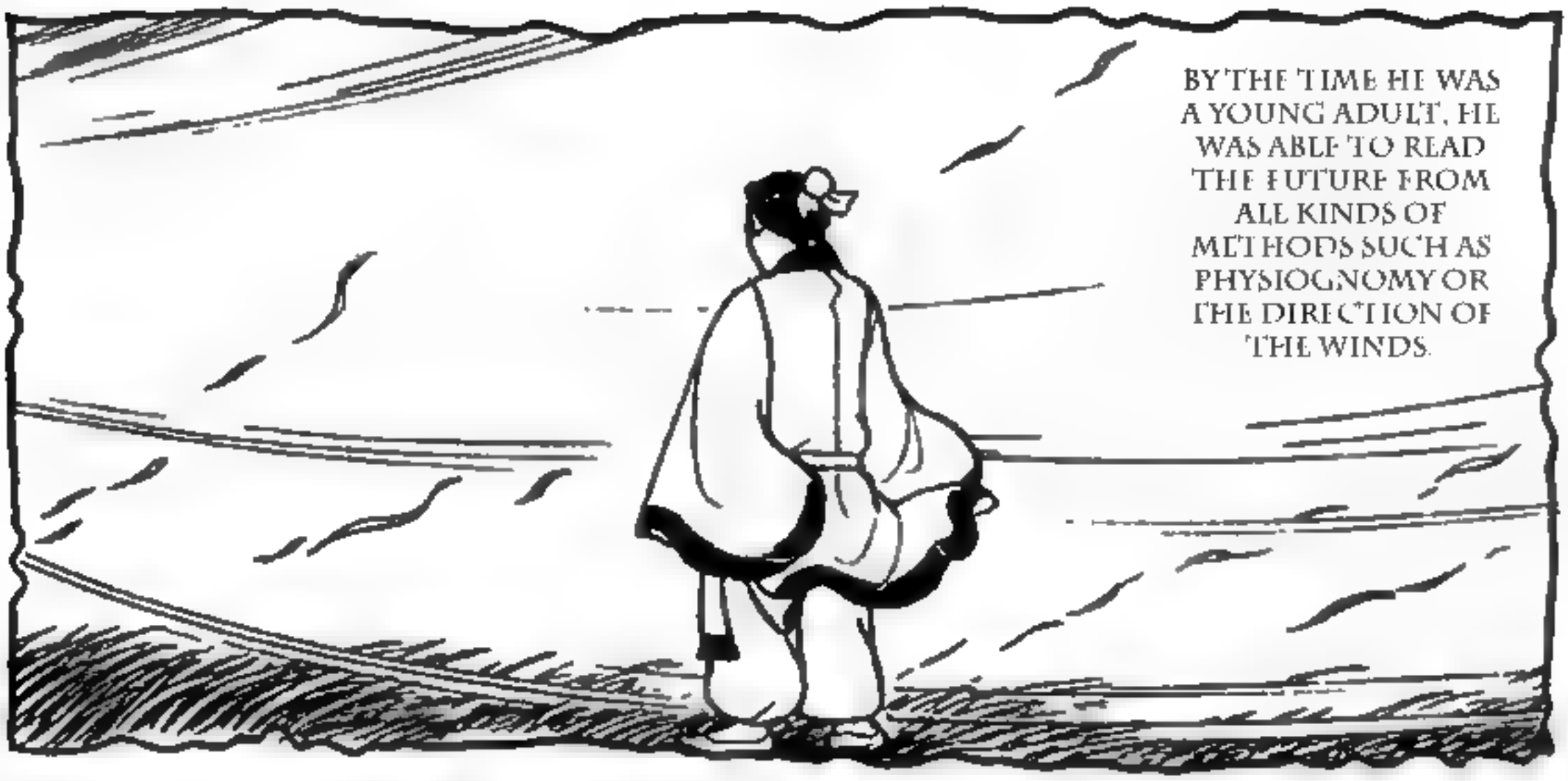
DO TELL.

YES, COUNT-LESS, SIR.

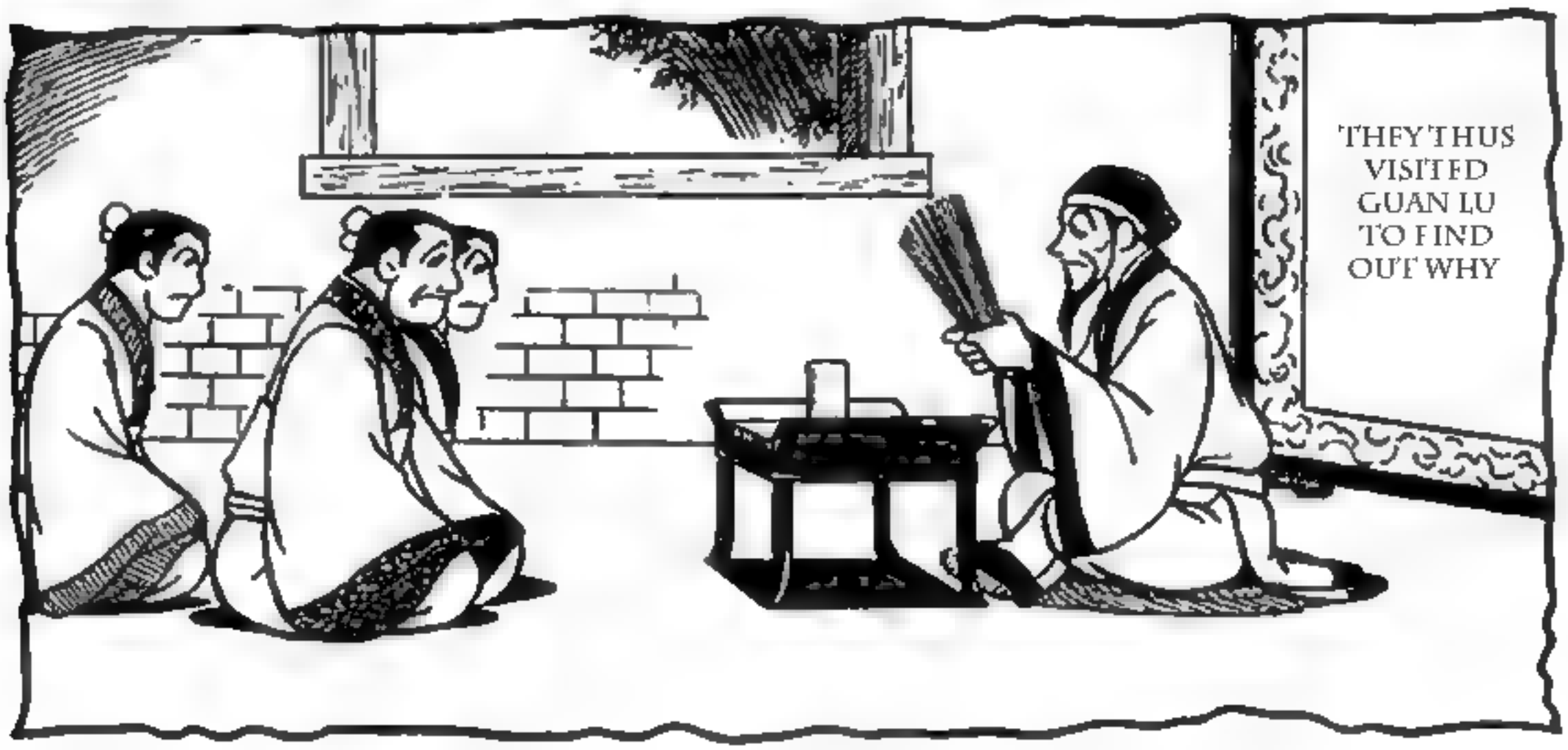
EVER SINCE HE WAS JUST 7 OR 8 YEARS OLD HIS FAVOURITE PASTIME WAS TO LOOK AT THE STARS. HE WOULD SOMETIMES LOOK AT THE STARS ALL NIGHT FOREGOING SLEEP

GUAN LU, COURTESY NAME GONGMING, HAILS FROM PINGYUAN.

WHEN HIS PARENTS SCOLDED HIM FOR IT HE RESPONDED, "EVEN COMMON FOWLS AND DUCKS KNOW THE TIMING OF SEASONS AND THE COMING OF STORMS. HOW CAN WE HUMANS, LIVING ON A HIGHER PLANE OF EXISTENCE, THUS BE IGNORANT OF THE WAY OF THE HEAVENS?"


BY THE TIME HE WAS A YOUNG ADULT, HE WAS ABLE TO READ THE FUTURE FROM ALL KINDS OF METHODS SUCH AS PHYSIOGNOMY OR THE DIRECTION OF THE WINDS.


ONCE A MAN NAMED GUO EN AND HIS TWO BROTHERS ALL BECAME LAME IN ONE LEG SUDDENLY.


THEY THUS VISITED GUAN LU TO FIND OUT WHY

AGHH!

HMM... IT APPEARS A WOMAN'S GHOST LURKS IN THE WELL NEAR YOUR HOME, MOST LIKELY YOUR LATE-AUNT. SOME TIME AGO, DURING A PERIOD OF HARSH FAMINE, YOU BROTHERS COULDN'T SPARE ANY GRAINS FOR HER AND SO YOU MURDERED HER BY PUSHING HER DOWN THE WELL AND THROWING A ROCK TO SPLIT HER SKULL, DID YOU NOT?

REPENT YOUR SINS BY BUILDING A PROPER GRAVE FOR HER AND BURNING INCENSE.

WE WILL DO SO RIGHT AWAY...

IT... IT'S EXACTLY AS YOU SAID...

TO THANK GUAN YU, THE BROTHERS TREATED HIM AS THEIR MOST HONOURED GUEST IN THEIR HOME FOR SEVERAL DAYS

GUAN LU CAST LOTS TO DETER MINE THE REASON

HOWEVER, DURING HIS STAY AT GUAN EN'S HOUSE, A DOVE PERCHED ON THE ROOF AND SANG A MOST MELANCHOLIC SONG

BUT WHILE YOU'RE DRINKING, SOMETHING QUITE STARTLING WILL HAPPEN.

NO, NOT REALLY. A RELATIVE OF YOURS WILL BE ARRIVING SOON FROM THE EAST WITH PORK AND WINE.

IS IT AN ILL OMEN?

?

JUST THEN, GUAN EN'S RELATIVE ARRIVED WITH PORK AND WINE JUST AS GUAN LU PREDICTED

GUAN EN THUS ORDERED HIS SERVANT TO KILL THE CHICKEN.

AS GUAN EN AND HIS BROTHERS WERE ENJOYING THE MEAL WITH THIS RELATIVE, THEY NOTICED THEY NEEDED MORE FOOD TO GO WITH THE WINE

HIS HAND SLIPPED.

BUT AS THE SERVANT READIED HIS BOW AND ARROW.

HITTING THE HAND OF THE DAUGHTER NEXT DOOR

AND THE ARROW FLEW ACROSS THE WALL.


THAT IS HOW ACCURATE GUAN LU'S PREDICTIONS ARE.


THE GIRL WAS NOT SERIOUSLY HURT BUT THE INCIDENT STARTLED EVERYONE


OF COURSE, SIR.


ANY MORE TALES?


ANOTHER TIME, WANG JI, THE GOVERNOR OF ANPING, INVITED GUAN LU

WANG JI'S WIFE HAD BEEN SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC HEADACHES, WHILE HIS SON HAD HEART PAINS. THERE HAD ALSO BEEN EERIE INCIDENTS TO SPOOK THE SERVANTS SO AT LAST, WANG JI DECIDED TO HAVE GUAN LU SOLVE THE CASE.

GUAN LU TOLD HIM THAT THERE WERE TWO MALE CORPSES BURIED AT THE WESTERN CORNER OF THE MAIN HALL. ONE HELD A SPEAR, THE OTHER, A BOW AND ARROW. THEIR HEADS WERE SITUATED WITHIN THE WALLS BUT THEIR LEGS LAY OUTSIDE THE WALLS. THE SPEARMEN'S JOB WAS TO PIERCE ENEMY HEADS, WHICH WAS WHY WANG JI'S WIFE SUFFERED FROM HEADACHES. MEANWHILE, THE BOWMAN'S JOB WAS TO SHOOT AT ENEMY HEARTS, WHICH WAS WHY HIS SON HAD HEART-PAINS.


THEY UNCOVERED TWO CASKETS
WANG JI ORDERED HIS SERVANTS TO DIG AT THE SPOT SPECIFIED BY GUAN LU.
THE OTHER, A BOW AND ARROW
INSIDE WERE SKELETONS ONE HOLDING A SPEAR,
GUAN LU INSTRUCTED WANG JI TO REBURY THESE BODIES 10 LI OUTSIDE FROM THE CITY WALLS.

HOW AMUSING... TELL ME MORE.

AND AFTER THAT, WANG JI'S WIFE AND SON WERE HEALTHEIR THAN THEY'D EVER BEEN!

AH, THERE'S ALSO THE INCIDENT OF THE CATTLE THIEVES.

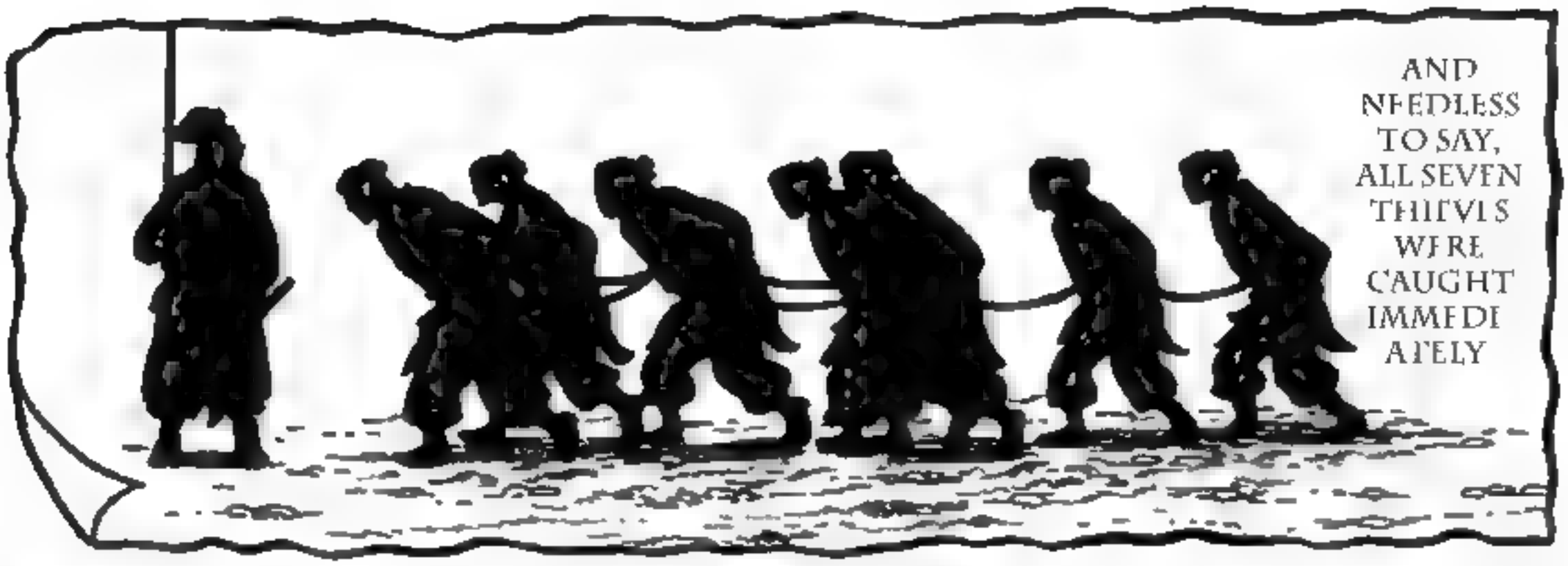
AN OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN THE SAME VILLAGE AS GUAN LU VISITED HIM ONE DAY TO INQUIRE ABOUT HER STOLEN CATTLE

GO TO THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE VALLEY NORTH FROM HERE. THERE, YOU WILL FIND YOUR 7 THIEVES.


THE OLD WOMAN DID AS SHE WAS TOLD,


AND THERE SHE FOUND SEVEN THIEVES WHO WERE ENJOYING WINE AND MEAT FROM SLAYING HER CATTLE.


THE OLD WOMAN QUICKLY REPORTED THIS TO THE AUTHORITIES,


AND NEEDLESS TO SAY, ALL SEVEN THIEVES WERE CAUGHT IMMEDIATELY


OH YES, BUT THEY'RE NOTHING COMPARED TO HIS MOST FAMOUS STORY.


HIS PREDICTIONS ARE THAT ACCURATE, ARE THEY NOW?


IT WAS SPRING AND GUAN LU WAS ENJOYING A NICE, LEISURELY STROLL.

MY NAME IS ZHAO YANG, AND I AM 19 YEARS OF AGE. WHY DO YOU ASK, SIR?

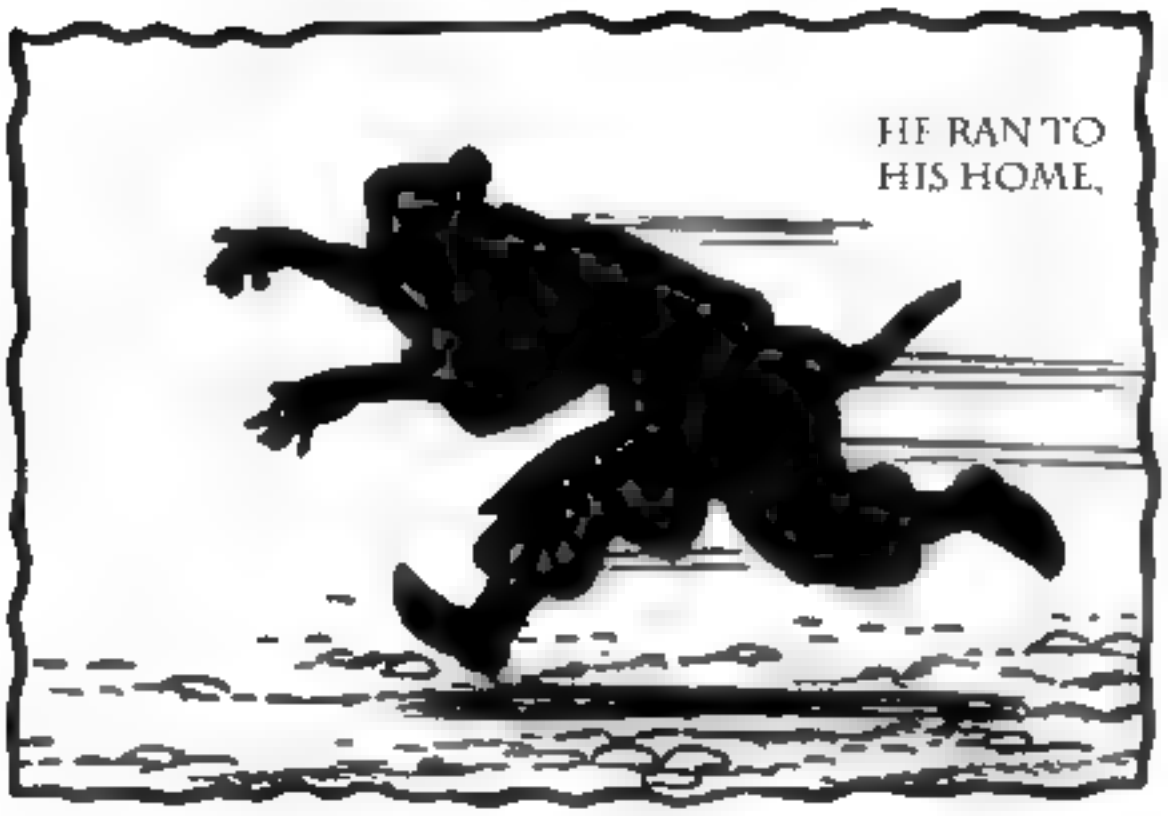
YOU THERE, WHAT IS YOUR NAME AND AGE?

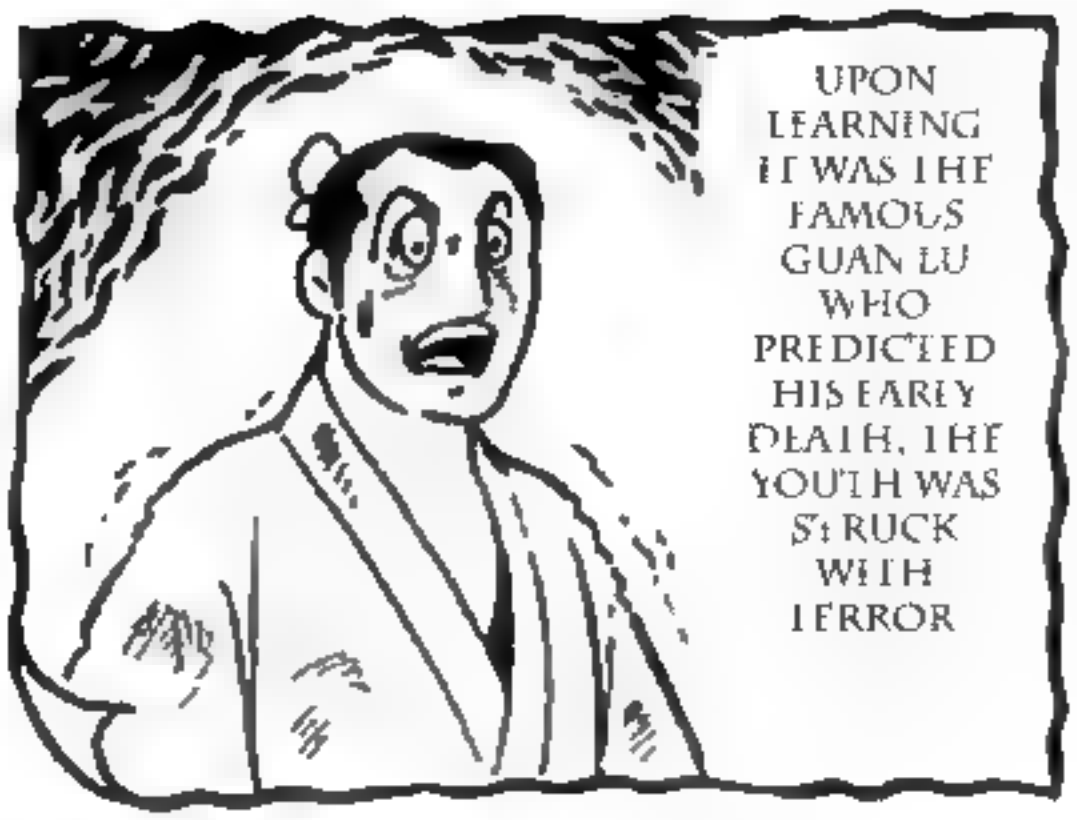
I'M AFRAID YOUR LIFE IS FATED TO END IN JUST THREE DAYS.

AHH! SUCH A PITY FOR A LAD SO YOUNG!

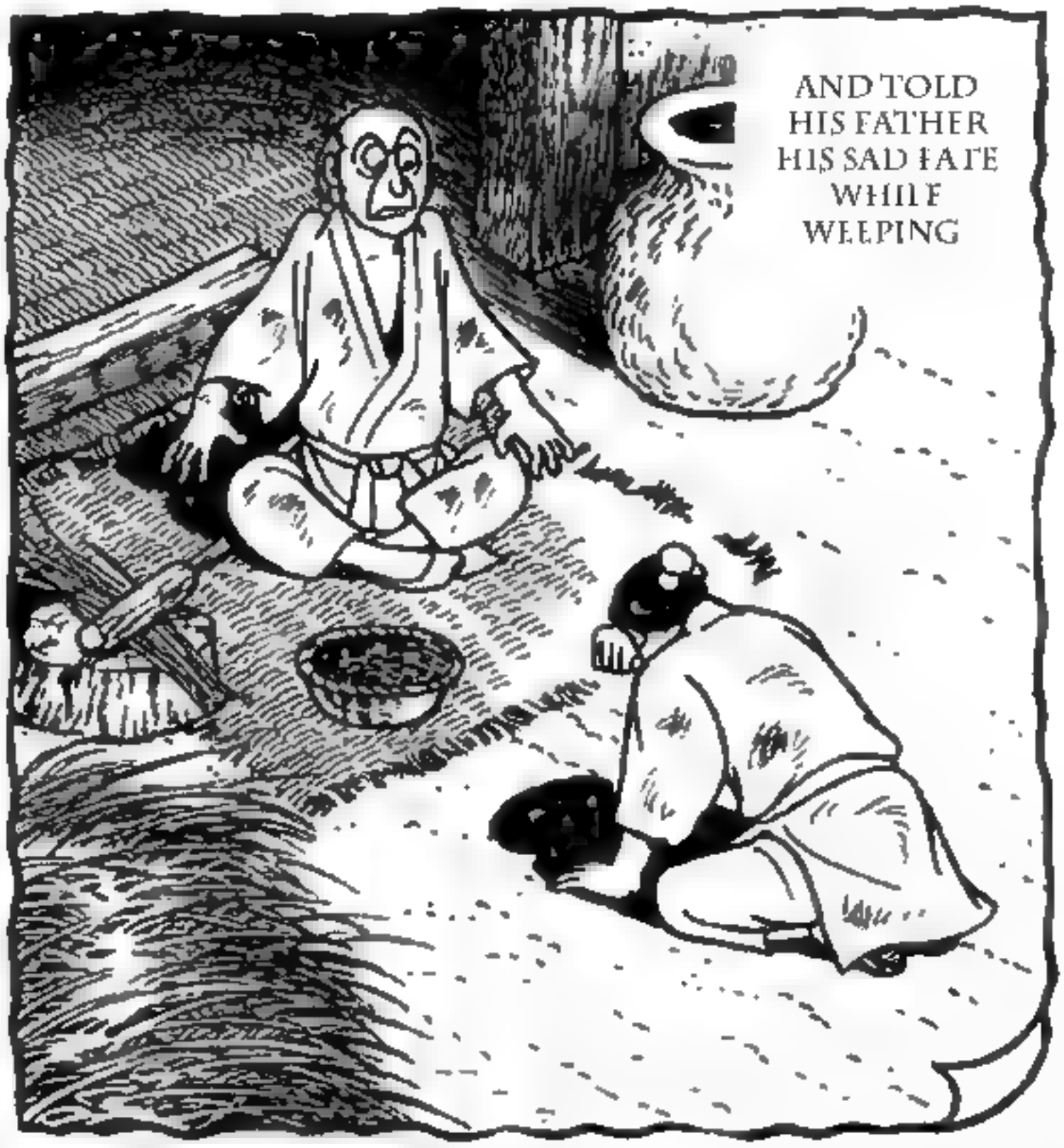
?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SIR?


HE RAN TO
HIS HOME.


UPON
LEARNING
IT WAS THE
FAMOUS
GUAN LU
WHO
PREDICTED
HIS EARLY
DEATH, THE
YOUTH WAS
STRUCK
WITH
TERROR


THE FATHER
IMMEDIATELY
RAN AFTER
GUAN LU.


AND TOLD
HIS FATHER
HIS SAD FATE
WHILE
WEEPING


AND BEGGED HIM
TO SAVE HIS ONE
AND ONLY SON.

PLEASE, SIR... THERE MUST BE SOMETHING A MAN SUCH AS YOU CAN DO...

I'M AFRAID THE LIFESPANS OF HUMANS ARE DICTATED BY HEAVEN ALONE. THERE'S NOTHING US MORTALS CAN DO.

WELL, THERE IS ONE METHOD, THOUGH IT'S NOT NORMALLY ALLOWED FOR MORTALS...

SIGH...

MY SON IS ALL I HAVE IN THIS WORLD. IF HE WERE TO DEPART THIS WORLD, THEN I TOO, WILL BE UNABLE TO BEAR LIVING MUCH LONGER.

PLEASE, SIR! TEACH US!

SOUTH FROM HERE?

ZHAO YANG. GET A JUG OF FINE WINE AND SOME GOOD DRIED VENISON TO TAKE WITH YOU TO THE HILLS SOUTH FROM HERE.

YES, AND UNDERNEATH A CERTAIN TALL TREE, YOU WILL FIND TWO MEN PLAYING A GAME OF GO. ONE WILL BE AN UNSIGHTLY OLD MAN WEARING WHITE AND SITTING, FACING SOUTH. THE OTHER WILL BE A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAN WEARING RED AND SITTING, FACING NORTH.

ONCE THEY HAVE FINISHED THE VENISON AND WINE, BEG THEM TO EXTEND YOUR LIFESPAN.

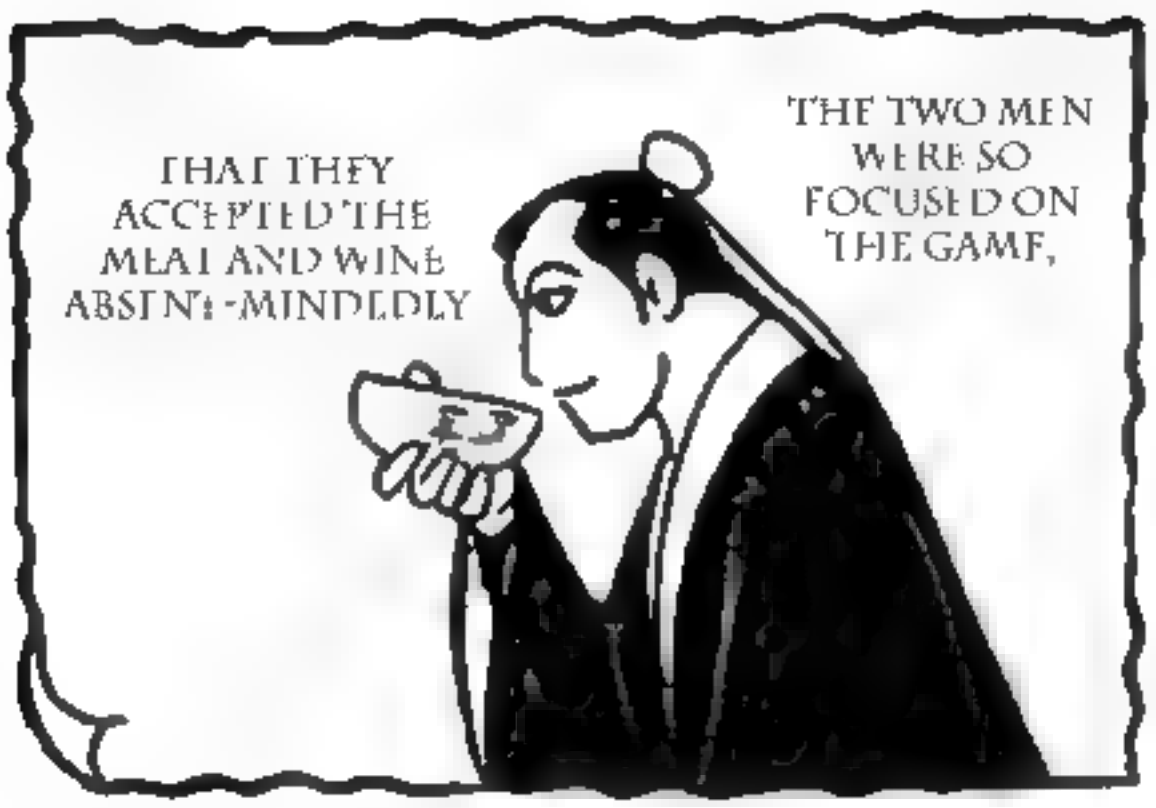
HUMBLY OFFER THEM THE VENISON AND WINE AS THEY PLAY GO.

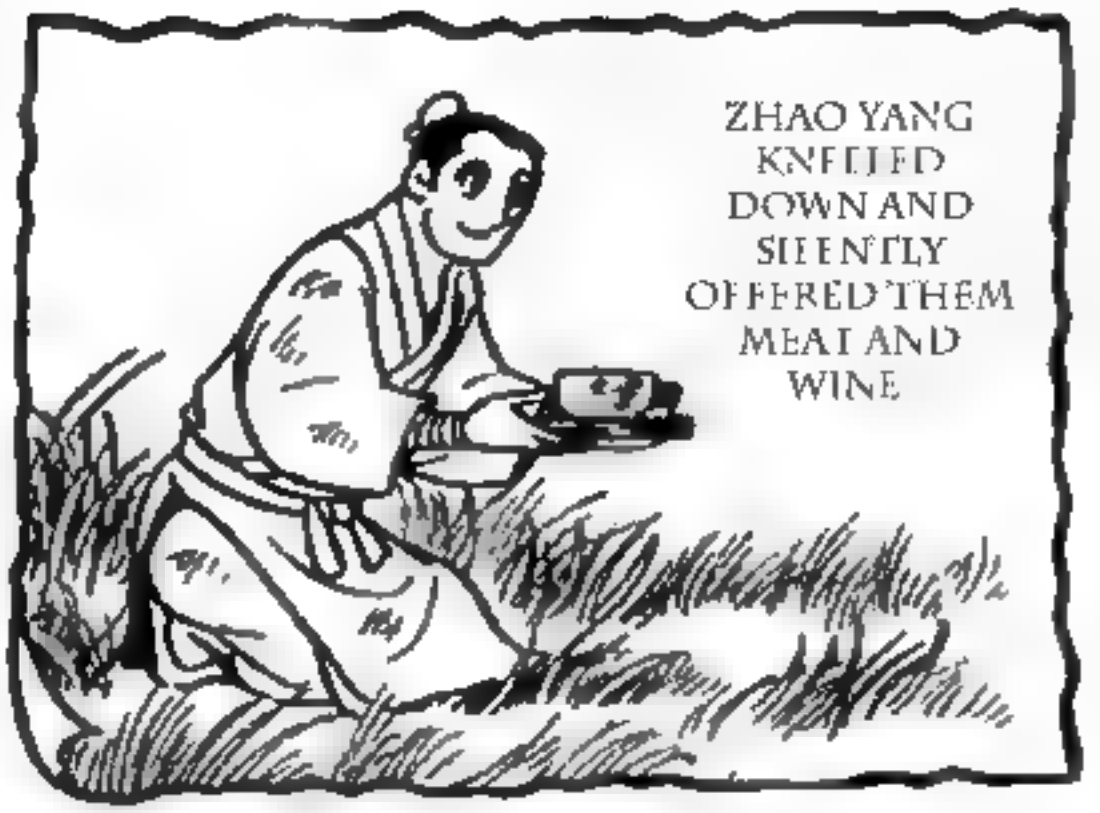
YES, SIR.

AND BE SURE TO NOT TELL THEM IT WAS ME WHO TOLD YOU ALL THIS.


THE NEXT DAY, ZHAO YANG HEADED UP THE HILLS


THERE, HE FOUND TWO MEN PLAYING GO UNDER A TALL TREE JUST AS GUAN LU HAD SAID


THAT THEY ACCEPTED THE MEAT AND WINE ABSENT-MINDEDLY
THE TWO MEN WERE SO FOCUSED ON THE GAME.


ZHAO YANG KNEELED DOWN AND SILENTLY OFFERED THEM MEAT AND WINE


I HAVE A REQUEST TO MAKE, SIRS.


BEFORE LONG, THEY HAD FINISHED ALL THE MEAT AND WINE.

HM?


PLEASE EXTEND MY LIFESPAN! I BEG OF YOU!

AH, WELL...

BUT HAVING ACCEPTED HIS MEAT AND WINE, WE CAN'T FLATLY REFUSE HIM EITHER...

HA, GUAN LU'S IDEA, I BET.

IT'S WRITTEN HERE THAT YOU'RE TO DIE AT 19 YEARS (十九) OF AGE.

THANK YOU, SIRS!

I'LL JUST ADD A 9 (九) AT THE FRONT SO YOUR LIFE WILL END AT 99 (九十九) INSTEAD.

Y-YES, SIR.

DO TELL GUAN LU TO AVOID BETRAYING THE SECRETS OF THE HEAVENS, OR HE WILL RECEIVE DIVINE PUNISHMENT ONE DAY...




YES.
SHALL WE GO THEN?





I SEE... THE MAN IN THE WHITE WAS THE NORTHERN DIPPER STAR WHILE THE MAN IN THE RED WAS THE SOUTHERN DIPPER STAR. THE NORTHERN DIPPER STAR RECORDS DEATH WHILE THE SOUTHERN DIPPER RECORDS LIFE. IN ANY CASE, YOU SHOULD ENJOY A LONG LIFE NOW.

UPON HIS RETURN, ZHAO YANG TOLD WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO GUAN LU

HOWEVER, SINCE THAT INCIDENT, GUAN LU REFRAINED FROM CASUALLY READING THE FUTURE, FEARING DIVINE PUNISHMENT.

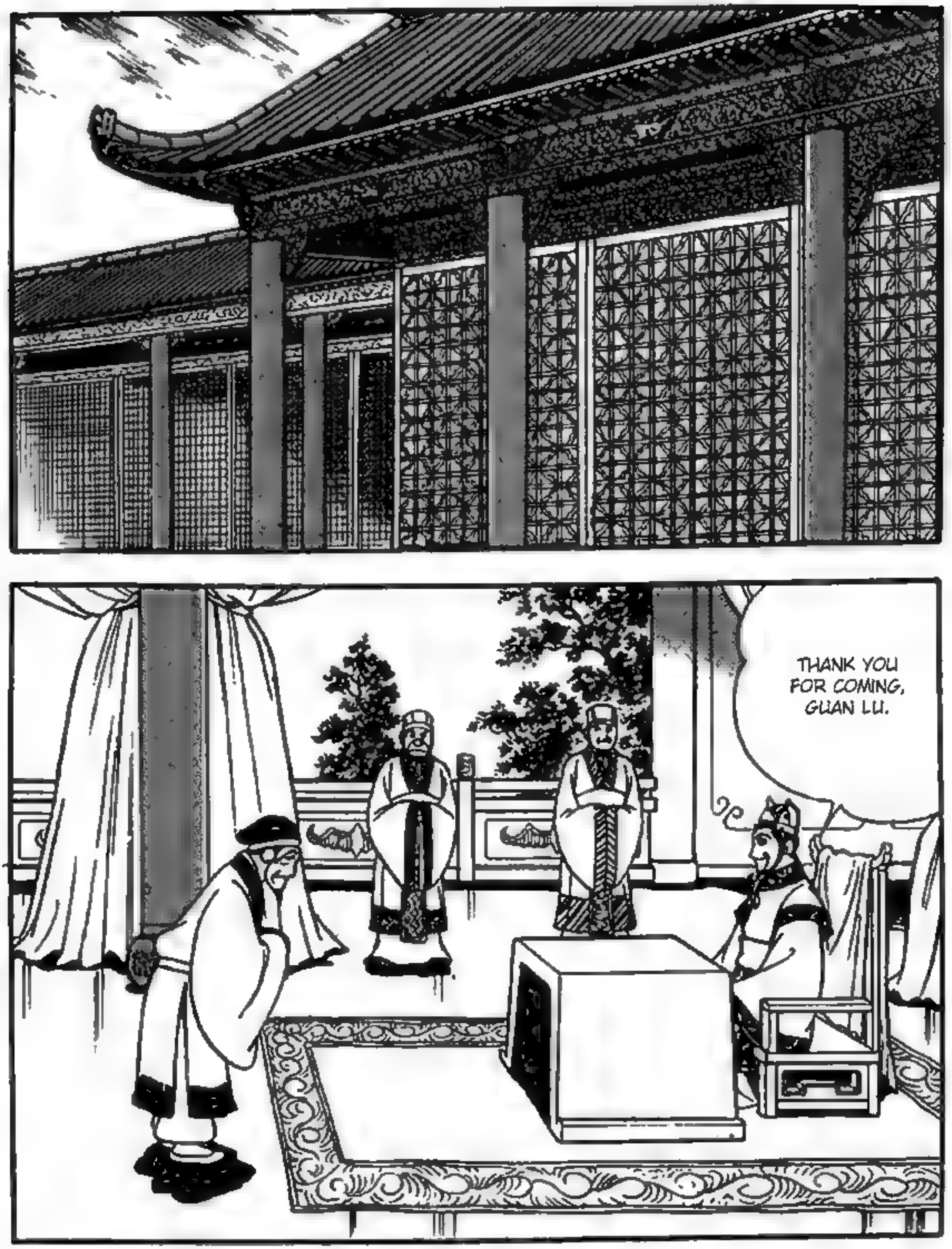
YES, THAT CERTAINLY WAS THE MOST INTERESTING TALE SO FAR. TO KNOW WHY AN ACCIDENT OCCURS AFTER IT HAS HAPPENED IS USELESS COMPARED TO KNOWING BEFOREHAND AND PREVENTING IT.

YES, SIR.

BRING GUAN LU BEFORE ME.

XU ZHI RUSHED OVER TO PINGYUAN AT ONCE TO CALL FOR GUAN LU

PROPHECY



SIR HAS ALREADY ACHIEVED INCOMPARABLE WEALTH, FAME, AND STATUS. YOUR FORTUNES NEED NOT BE TOLD, FOR THEY HAVE COME TO FRUITION.

CAN YOU READ MY FACE USING PHYSI-OGNOMY TO PREDICT MY FORTUNES?

AH, SUCH PHANTOM TRICKS ARE MERELY TRIVIAL SUPERSTITIONS AND NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY FOR THE MOST PART.

THEN CAN YOU TELL ME IF MY RECENT ILLNESS IS DUE TO SOME SUPERNATU-RAL SPIRITS OR CURSES?

HEARING THAT FROM YOU, MY MIND FEELS MUCH LIGHTER ALREADY.

AH, SO IT IS MY MIND'S OUTLOOK THAT IS AT FAULT, IS IT?

IF YOU ARE FEELING ILL, THE CAUSES ARE FAR LIKELIER TO BE INTERNAL, NOT EXTERNAL. A SICKNESS OF THE MIND OR HEART, IF YOU WILL.

ALTHOUGH I HAD STOPPED READING INTO THE FUTURE, IF IT IS YOUR WILL, THEN I MUST SUBMIT.

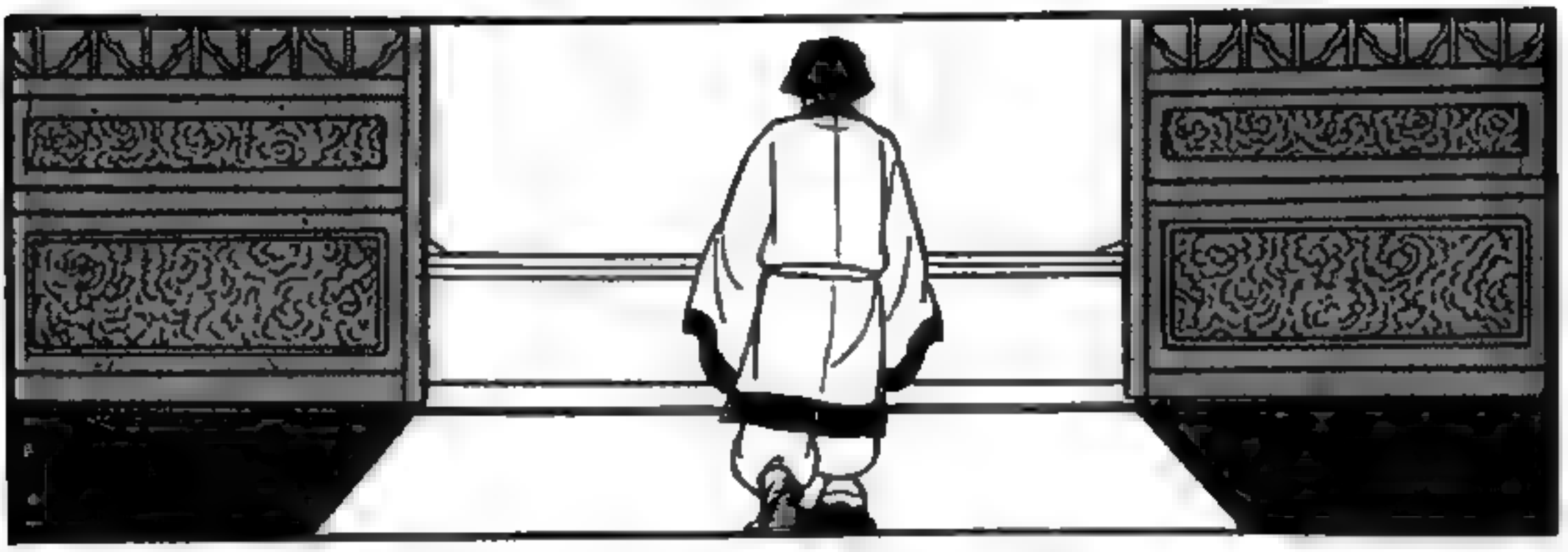
THEN COULD YOU PERHAPS DIVINE THE FATES OF WU AND SHU?

A LEADER FALLS IN WU, WHILE SHU GROWS STRONGER. THEY WILL SOON INVADE YOUR BORDERS.

WELL?


THANK YOU, SIR.


I SEE... THANK YOU FOR YOUR ADVICE. PLEASE STAY HERE IN THE PALACE FOR THE TIME BEING.






HMM... THEY ARE HARD TO BELIEVE, I MUST ADMIT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HIS PROPHECIES JUST NOW?

A MESSENGER HAS JUST ARRIVED FROM HEFEI, SIR.

WHAT!?

LU SU, THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF WU, HAS JUST PASSED AWAY AFTER FALLING ILL FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

IT'S JUST AS GUAN LU PREDICTED...

YES, SIR.

LU SU PASSED AWAY!?

A MERE FEW DAYS LATER, ANOTHER MESSENGER ARRIVED, THIS TIME FROM HANZHONG.

MNN... GUAN LU WAS RIGHT AGAIN...

YES, SIR. ZHANG FEI AND MA CHAO HAVE TAKEN XIABIAN PASS AND A FULL-SCALE INVASION OF HANZHONG LOOKS IMMINENT.

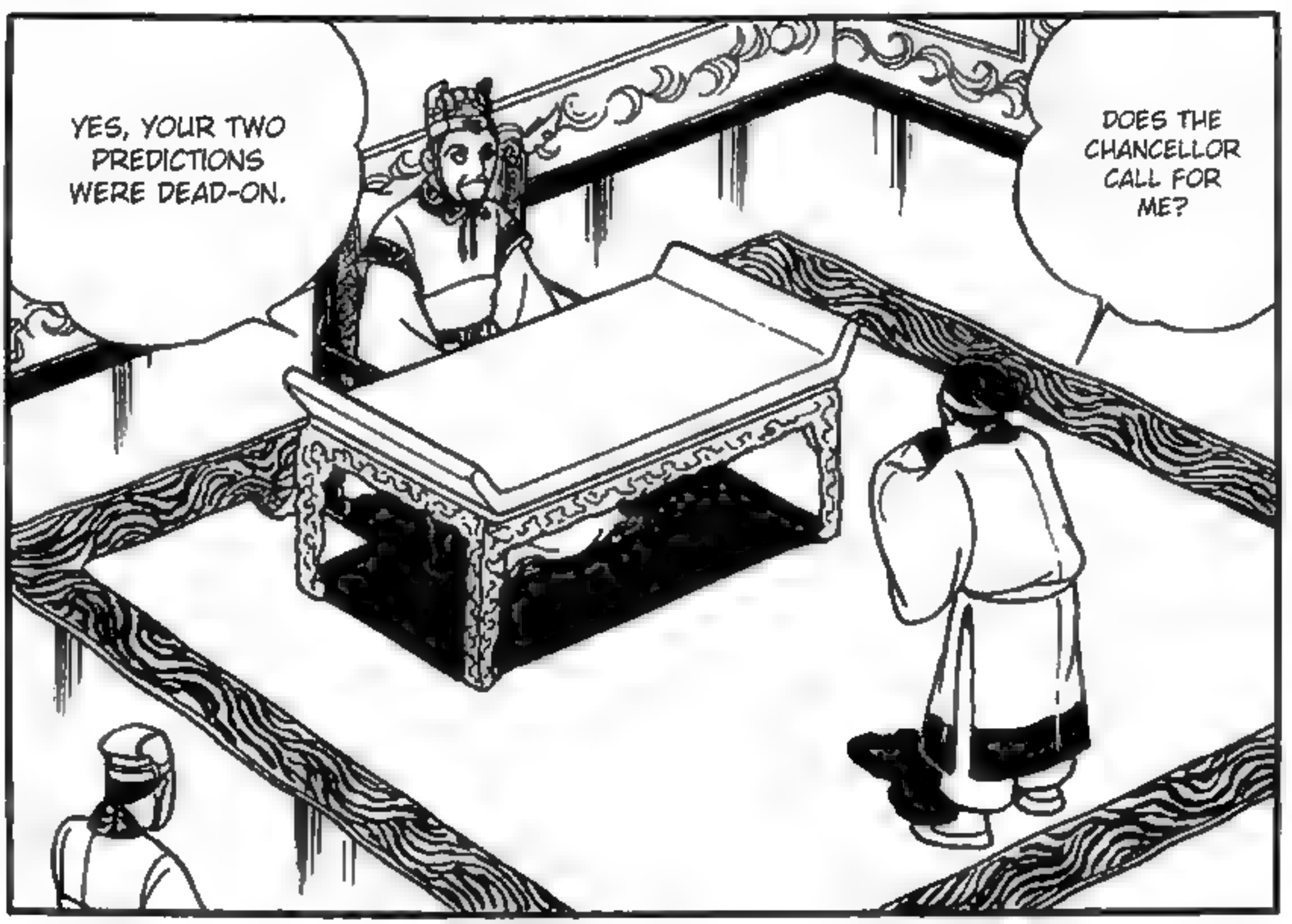
WHAT!? SHU HAS INVADED HANZHONG'S BORDERS?

MEN! ORGANIZE THE ARMY AND PREPARE TO SET OFF FOR HANZHONG! WE MUST CRUSH LIU BEI ONCE AND FOR ALL THIS TIME!


YES, SIR.


AND CALL GUAN LU HERE.




YES, YOUR TWO PREDICTIONS WERE DEAD-ON.
DOES THE CHANCELLOR CALL FOR ME?

IT IS UNWISE FOR YOU TO TRAVEL SO FAR.

I'M ABOUT TO SET OFF FOR HANZHONG WITH MY ARMY AND CLASH WITH LIU BEI. DO YOU THINK THIS IS THE RIGHT DECISION?

EARLY NEXT SPRING, A CONFLAGRATION WILL BREAK OUT IN THE CAPITAL.

WHAT!? DOES MY CAMPAIGN NOT BODE WELL?

THANK YOU FOR WARNING ME.

YES.

NOT HERE IN YEJUN BUT XUCHANG!?

I WILL BELIEVE IN YOUR WORDS AND REFRAIN FROM PERSONALLY SETTING OFF FOR THE TIME BEING.

YES?

CAO HONG!

YES, SIR!

TAKE AN ARMY OF 50,000 TO DEFEND HANZHONG.

YES?

XIAHOU DUN!

LET'S SEE, WHAT ELSE...

YES, SIR.

TAKE AN ARMY OF 30,000 TO XUCHANG TO QUELL ANY TROUBLE THAT SPRINGS UP.

AH, I KNOW. I SHALL APPOINT WANG BI AS THE HEAD OF THE IMPERIAL GUARDS.

HAHA. WORRY NOT, SIMA YI.

IF I MAY INTERJECT, CHANCELLOR, WANG BI HAS A WEAKNESS FOR WINE. I DO NOT BELIEVE HE IS FIT FOR SUCH AN IMPORTANT POST.

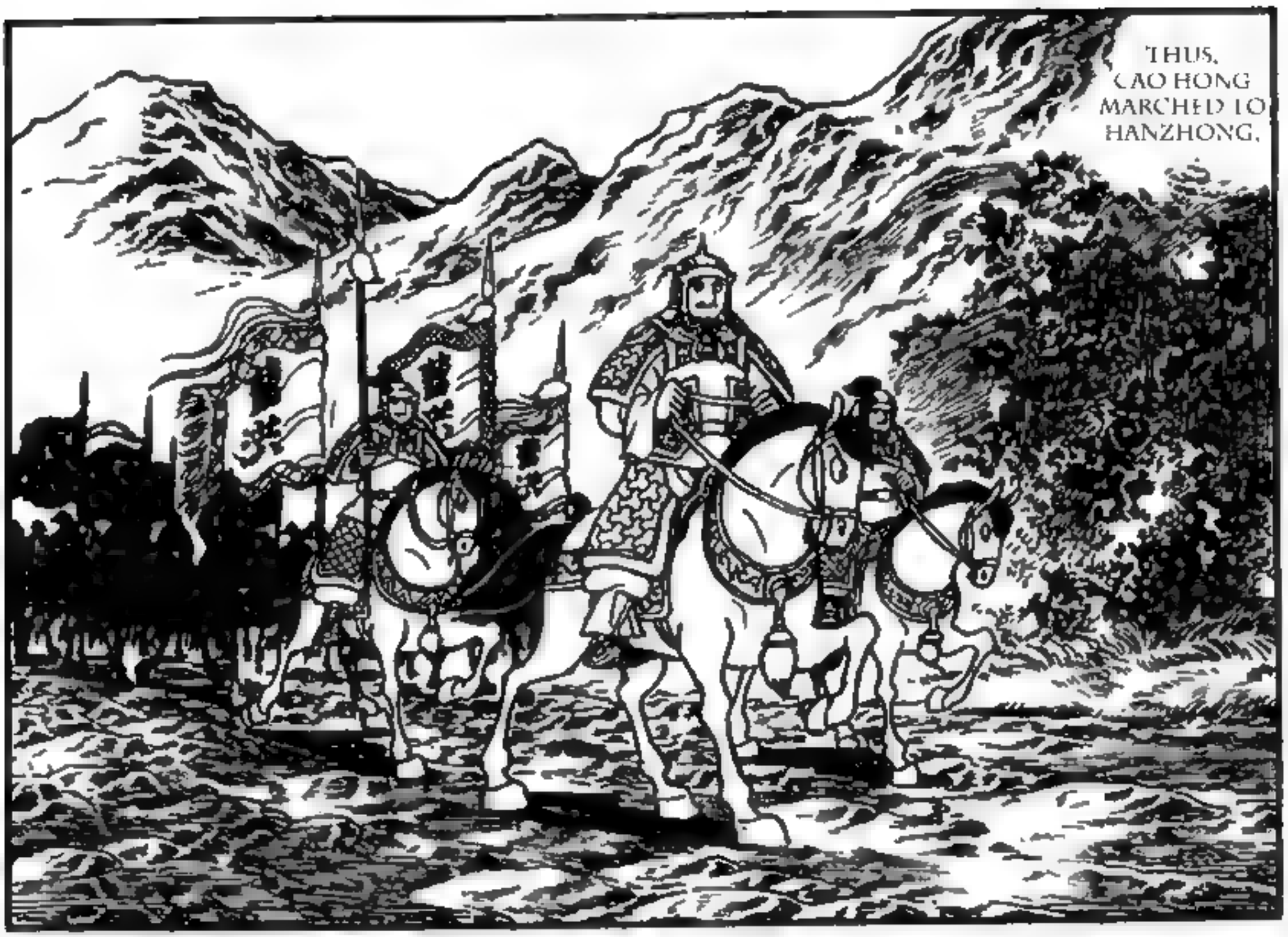
I DEFER TO YOUR WISDOM THEN.

I'M WELL AWARE OF WANG BI'S WEAKNESSES. NONETHELESS, HE HAS STEADFASTLY AND MOST LOYALLY SERVED ME FOR MANY YEARS. LEADING THE IMPERIAL GUARDS IS NEITHER TOO ABOVE NOR TOO BENEATH HIS CAPABILITIES.

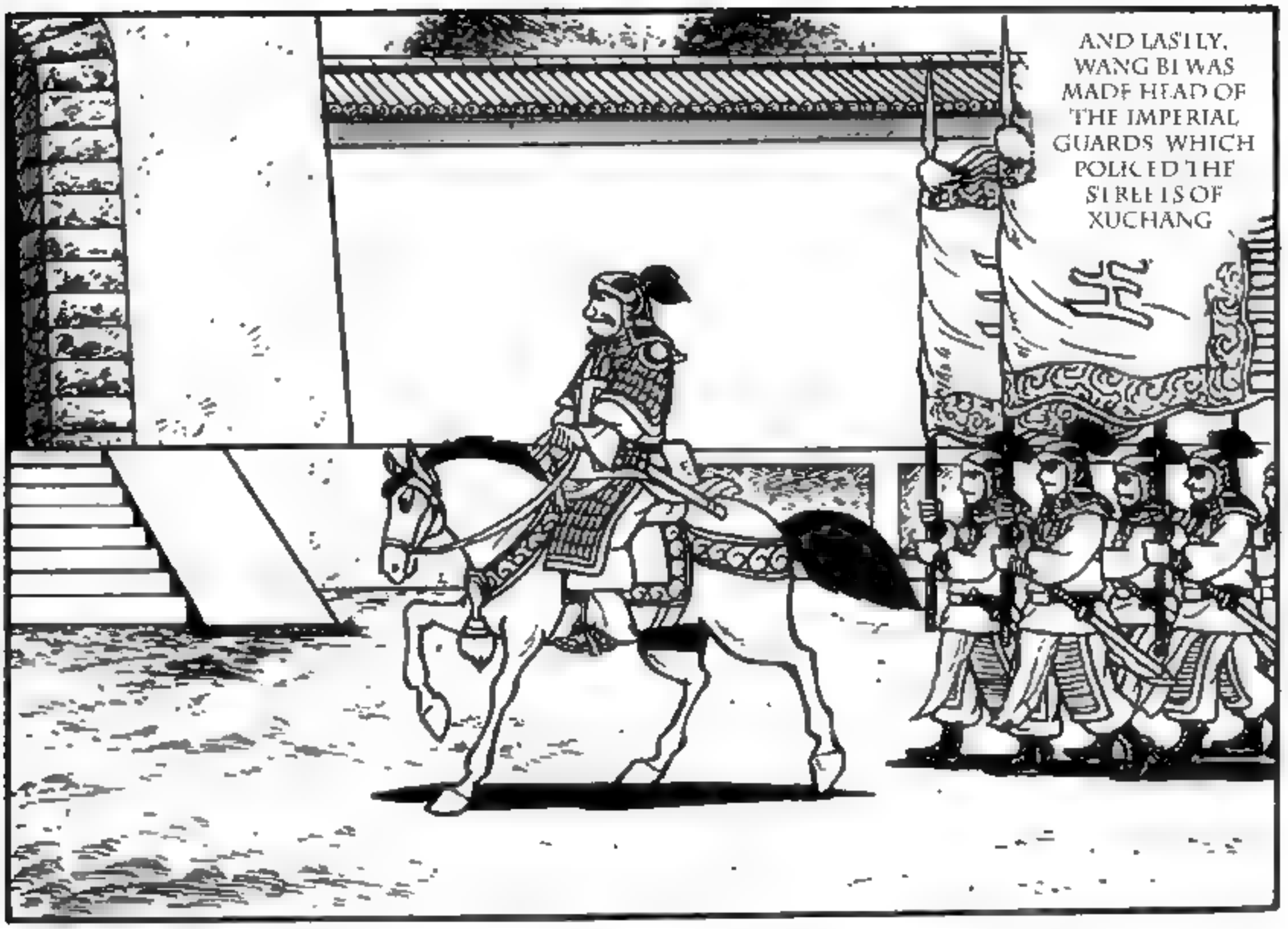
YES, SIR!

YES, SIR!

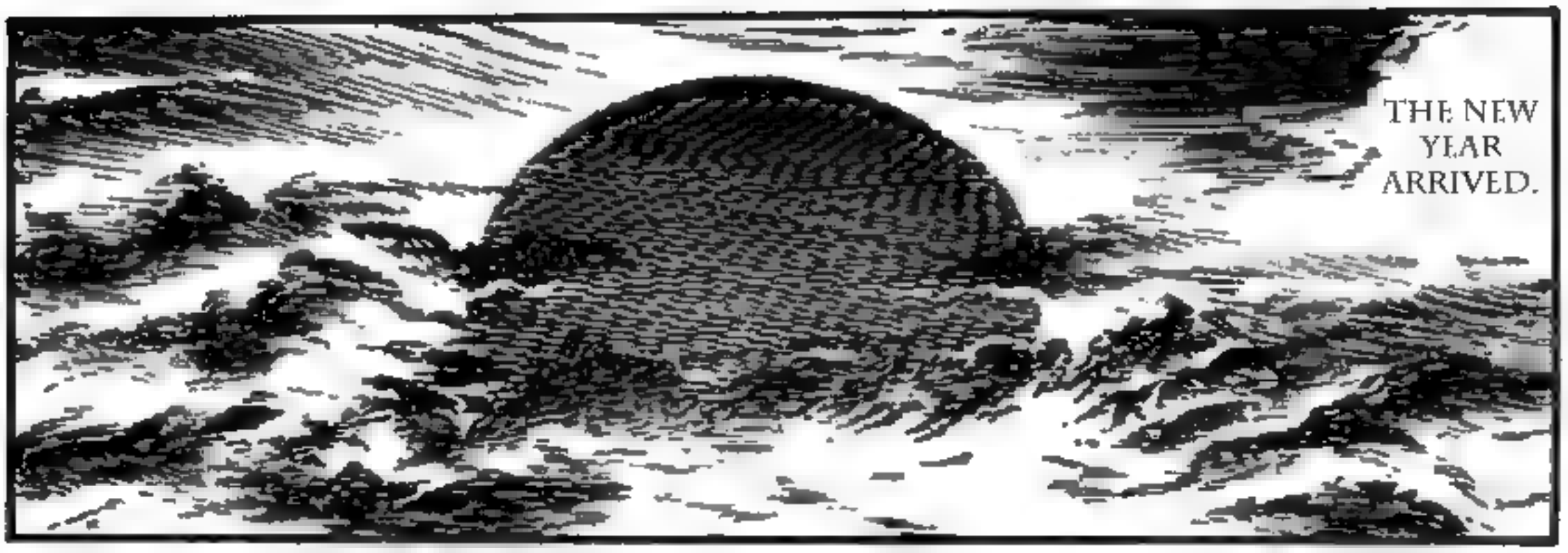
ALRIGHT THEN. QUICKLY SET OFF, GENERALS!


THUS,
CAO HONG
MARCHED TO
HANZHONG.


AND
XIAHOU
DUN TO
THE OUT-
SKIRTS OF
XUCHANG


AND LASTLY, WANG BI WAS MADE HEAD OF THE IMPERIAL GUARDS WHICH POLICED THE STREETS OF XUCHANG


CAO CAO WAS DETERMINED TO PREVENT THE CATASTROPHE THAT GUAN LU PROPHESIED.


THE NEW YEAR ARRIVED.
PERHAPS CAO CAO ISN'T SATISFIED WITH HIS NEW TITLE AS PRINCE OF WEI...
YES, I'VE BEEN PONDERING THAT, GENG JI..
HE'S NOT ONLY CHANGED THE HEAD OF THE IMPERIAL GUARDS BUT STATIONED AN ARMY OF 30,000 RIGHT OUTSIDE THE CITY.
WEI HUANG, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF CAO CAO'S RECENT ACTIONS?
YOU MEAN HE WANTS THE IMPERIAL THRONE?
AS LOYAL SERVANTS OF HAN, WE CANNOT JUST STAND BY AND LET IT HAPPEN!
HMM, THAT IS QUITE LIKELY. JUST THE FACT THAT HE'S BUILT HIMSELF A NEW PALACE AT YEJUN EVEN GRANDER THAN THE IMPERIAL PALACE REVEALS HIS ASPIRATIONS

FIRST, WE MUST GET THE IMPERIAL GUARDS ON OUR SIDE.

BUT HOW?

WE MUST GATHER ALLIES AND ACT NOW WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME.

I HAVE A FRIEND NAMED JIN YI, WHO IS THE DESCENDANT OF JIN MIDI, THE MOST LOYAL MINISTER OF EMPEROR WU AND THE REGENT OF EMPEROR ZHAO. HE TOO, WISHES CAO CAO'S DESTRUCTION. HE IS ON GOOD TERMS WITH WANG BI AND CAN HELP US TAKE CARE OF HIM.

BUT THEN HOW DO WE TAKE CARE OF WANG BI?

WE'LL USE THE IMPERIAL GUARDS TO PROTECT THE EMPEROR AND THE CAPITAL, WHILE WE CALL FOR LIU BEI'S HELP TO ATTACK CAO CAO.

NO, JIN YI IS LOYAL TO HAN FIRST AND FOREMOST. JUSTICE COMES BEFORE FRIENDSHIP FOR HIM.

IF HE'S FRIENDS WITH WANG BI, WOULD HE NOT ENDANGER OUR PLAN?


FINE.
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, THEN LET US GO TEST JIN YI'S CONVICTION.


THAT ISN'T JUST WISHFUL THINKING, IS IT NOW?


AND SO, WEI HUANG AND GENG JI VISITED JIN YI.

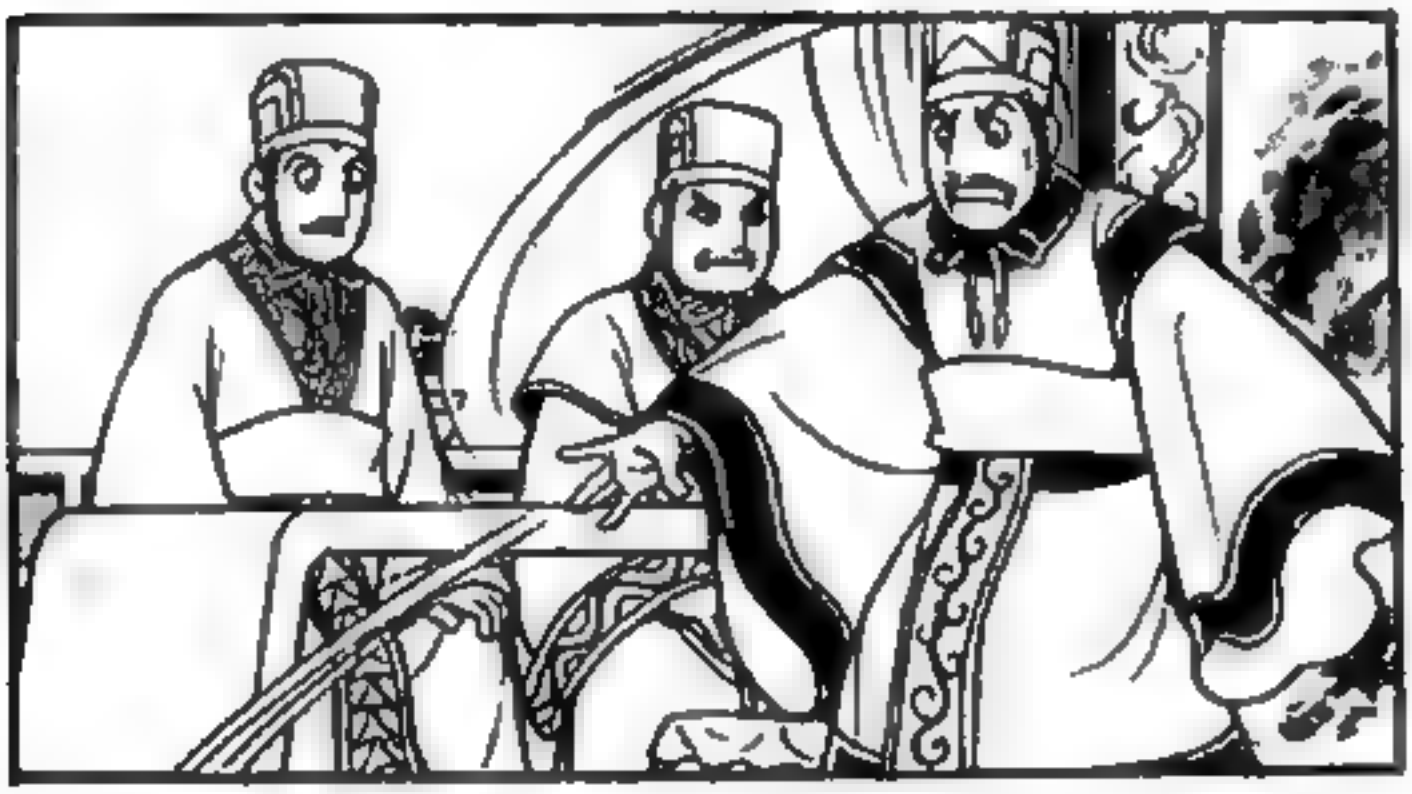

WE CAME HERE TO REQUEST A FAVOUR.

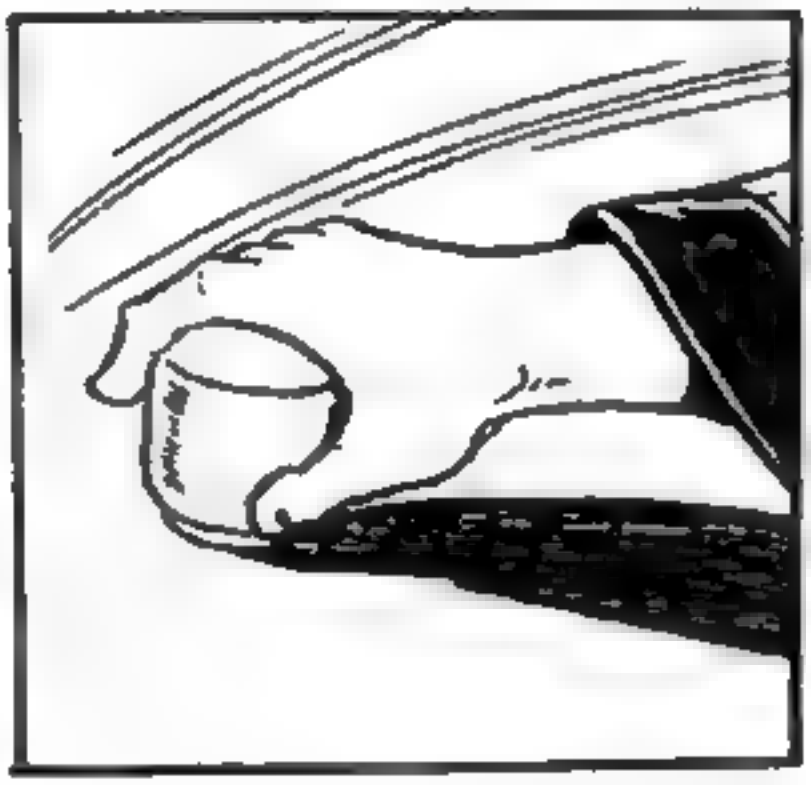

WELCOME, WHAT BRINGS THE TWO OF YOU TO MY HOME TODAY?


A FAVOUR?




YOU'RE ON GOOD TERMS WITH WANG BI, ARE YOU NOT? SINCE HE'S BEEN MADE THE HEAD OF THE IMPERIAL GUARDS, YOU'LL SOON RISE THROUGH THE RANKS AS WELL. WHEN THAT TIME COMES, I HOPE YOU CAN HELP US ACHIEVE RANK AND STATUS AS WELL.





IS THIS ANY WAY TO TREAT AN OLD FRIEND!?

I HAVE NO TEA TO SERVE YOU SWINE!

PERHAPS IT IS HEAVEN'S WILL FOR CAO CAO TO RISE, NO?

YOU WERE MY GOOD FRIEND FOR I BELIEVED YOU TO BE A LOYAL SERVANT OF HAN! BUT NOW I SEE YOU FOR THE MORALLY BANKRUPT WRETCH YOU ARE, PERFECTLY WILLING TO SELL YOUR LOYALTY FOR RICHES! GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!

SILENCE! SAY ANY MORE AND I WILL CUT YOU DOWN HERE ON THE SPOT!

WE ARE ACTUALLY FORMULATING A PLAN TO TAKE DOWN CAO CAO.

WHAT!?

FORGIVE US, JIN YI, FOR DECEIVING YOU JUST NOW.

FIRST WE MUST KILL WANG BI AND TURN THE IMPERIAL GUARDS ON OUR SIDE.

YOU ARE!? W-WHAT SORT OF PLAN!?

HMM...

THE IMPERIAL GUARDS WILL THEN DEFEND XUCHANG WHILE WE CALL FOR HELP FROM LIU BEI. AN ATTACK FROM INSIDE AND OUTSIDE MAY BRING DOWN CAO CAO FOR GOOD...

YES, LET US CARRY OUT THE PLAN THEN.

YES, I WILL DO SO TOO.

WE MUST FIRST GATHER MORE ALLIES.

THE 15TH OF THIS MONTH SHOULD DO.

WHEN SHALL WE ACT?

WANG BI WILL MOST LIKELY DRINK TOO MUCH AND LOWER HIS GUARD ON THAT DAY.

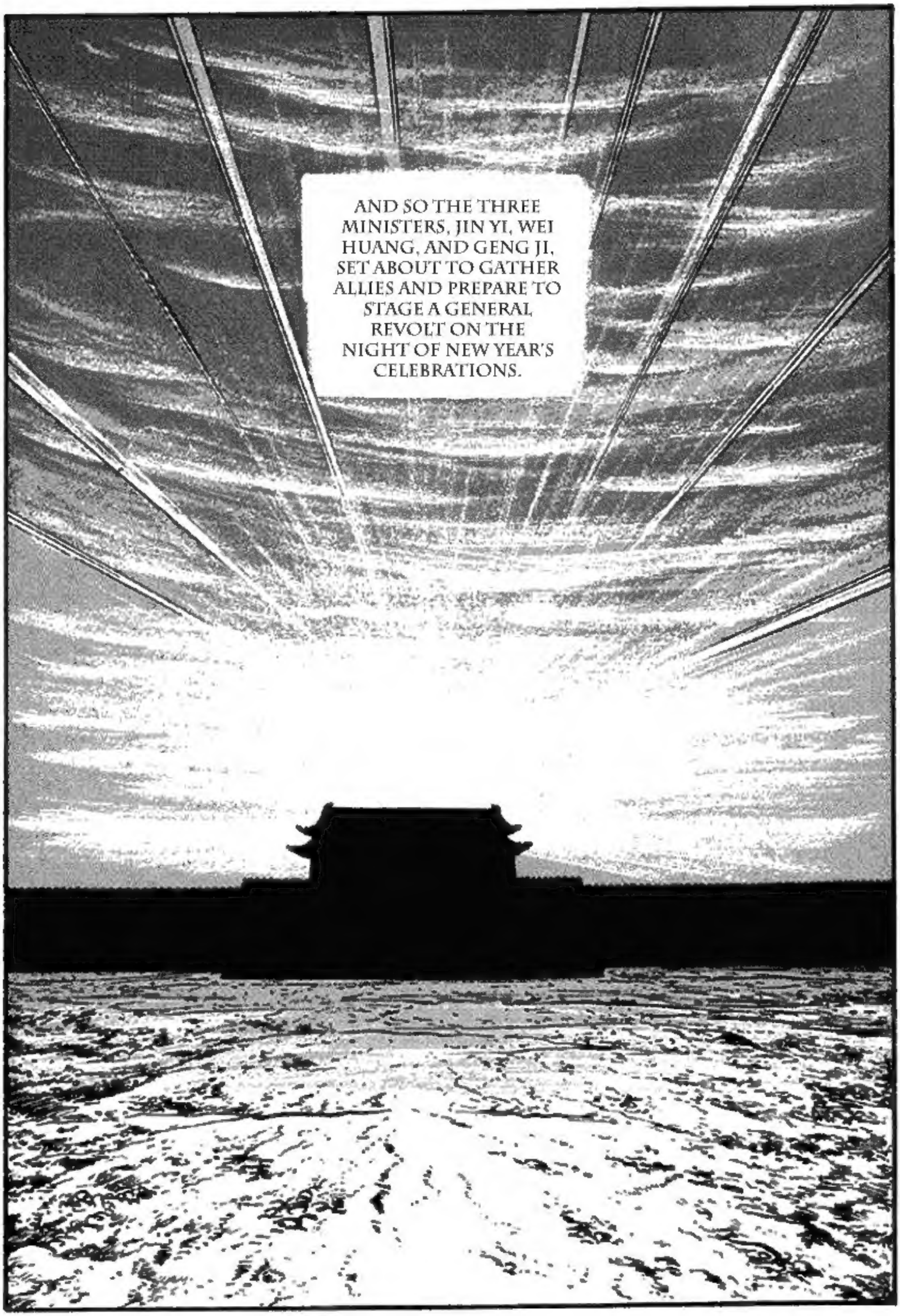
THE NEW YEAR'S FESTIVAL WILL BE HELD ON THAT DAY, AND ALL THE CITIZENS FROM THE YOUNG TO THE OLD WILL BE CELEBRATING.

WE WILL ALSO CHARGE INSIDE THE PALACE AND BEG THE EMPEROR TO ISSUE AN IMPERIAL EDICT LABELLING CAO CAO AS A REBEL AND CALLING FOR HIS IMMEDIATE DESTRUCTION. WITH THE EDICT, MANY MORE PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE REALM WILL SOON JOIN OUR CAUSE.

THAT NIGHT, WE WILL SET FIRE TO WANG BI'S HOUSE AND SLAY HIM.

YES.

WE MUST BE DISCREET AND SWIFT, LEST SUFFER THE SAME FATE AS DONG CHENG.


AND SO THE THREE MINISTERS, JIN YI, WEI HUANG, AND GENG JI, SET ABOUT TO GATHER ALLIES AND PREPARE TO STAGE A GENERAL REVOLT ON THE NIGHT OF NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

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電子書籍版

三国志

37

横山 光輝

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